

**your  job**

# BEYOND-THE- CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES



# Mission

Our most critical mission is to show all young people that there's no single route to success, and that anything is possible. Your🔥Job empowers kids to tap into their strengths and start exploring career opportunities relevant to the ever-changing future of work.



Your 🔥 Job invites youth to discover an ever-expanding range of careers and explore the many available paths to a future of meaningful work, all based on a kid's unique mixture of talents and interests.

A super easy-to-use platform showcases videos, articles, and interactive quizzes.

Top-notch content by the team at TIME for Kids—featuring dynamic leaders in their fields—means Your 🔥 Job is as relevant and engaging as it is accessible and inclusive.

## CAREER EXPLORATION MATTERS

### KIDS ARE EMPOWERED TO . . .

- ✓ **Gain valuable insight** into potential careers.
- ✓ **Imagine** themselves in the workplace.
- ✓ **Make informed decisions** both during and after their academic careers.
- ✓ **Discover what** skills they need and routes they can take to **reach their goals.**

#### ASPIRATIONS HAVEN'T CHANGED

Young people's career aspirations have remained largely frozen since

# 2000

#### CHANGING CAREERS

# 61%

of college grads would change their majors if they could go back

#### LACK OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Across all schools, the average student-to-school-counselor ratio is

# 464:1



# About this Resource

Your  Job was designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills to prepare for wherever the future might take them. Continuing conversations after school can cement new ideas and open the door to opportunities. This set of 12 activities can be used by families or community members to further engage students in exploring what's possible. We recommend using all 12 of the activities, but they can be used in any order you choose.

| ACTIVITY                               | FOCUS                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MOTIVATION MATTERS</b>              | This activity asks adults to share the path they have taken before asking children to consider what they value in a potential job or career.       |
| <b>EMPHASIZING OUR STRENGTHS</b>       | In this activity, kids and adults identify their strengths and use them as daily affirmations.                                                     |
| <b>WHAT PATHS CAN I TAKE?</b>          | This activity asks kids to consider who might support them in their decision-making before they explore some options in a “would you rather” game. |
| <b>REAL TALK ABOUT REAL JOBS</b>       | This activity asks kids to explore different career possibilities, with the understanding that these may not always be exactly what they expected. |
| <b>SKILLS, SKILL, SKILLS</b>           | This activity helps kids identify the skills they have and those they might need for careers they're interested in.                                |
| <b>TIME MANAGEMENT</b>                 | In this activity, kids will get gain some understanding of how they look at time and learn how better to manage it.                                |
| <b>PROBLEM-SOLVING</b>                 | In this activity, kids and adults will flex their creative problem-solving muscles and see how innovative they are.                                |
| <b>CONFLICT RESOLUTION</b>             | This activity has kids assess their feelings about conflict, and provides tips for addressing conflict in productive ways.                         |
| <b>COMMUNICATION</b>                   | In this activity, kids consider how they prefer to communicate and how best to express themselves to others.                                       |
| <b>COLLABORATION</b>                   | This activity has kids come up with a “dream team” to better understand what they contribute to a group, and what others might add.                |
| <b>DEFINING SUCCESS</b>                | In this activity, kids will define success and celebrate small successes.                                                                          |
| <b>NAVIGATING CHANGE AND ADVERSITY</b> | This activity develops kids' understanding of adversity and helps them build strategies for overcoming it.                                         |



# MOTIVATION MATTERS

## Dear Families and Community Members,

What gets you out of bed in the morning? (We aren't talking about your alarm clock.) The things that motivate you to get going each day might not be something you actively think about. But being in touch with your "why" helps you stay focused on your goals and keeps you going when times get tough.

Getting kids to understand what motivates them can help them get to know themselves better and set them up for success in pursuing their dreams. Watch the video [On Motivation](#) with your child. Then try the activities below.

## TALK ABOUT IT

As a trusted adult with more life experience, you've got valuable knowledge to share with a child. To begin, share your responses to the following:

- When you were a little kid, what job did you see yourself doing in the future?
- What has changed since then?
- Are there any changes you'd like to make?

Then let your child take the lead:

- What did you first think you wanted to be when you grew up? Has that changed?
- Where did these career dreams come from?
- Which aspects of your dream job are most important to you?

## TRY IT OUT

Share the story of your job path. Talk through what motivates you to do the job you are doing and what has motivated you in past jobs. You might have been motivated to get your first job so you could have money to hang out with your friends. How have your motivations changed? Draw your career path in chalk on the sidewalk or in markers on a piece of paper.

Then let your child do the same. Point out that the world has changed since you were their age. That can lead to a great conversation about leaving room for possibilities that don't exist yet.

Times change, and people do too. But there are some things about us that stay the same. Have kids note some things that motivate them about their path. These can be things like family, helping others, and financial security. These motivators can help keep them going in the right direction, whatever that may be.



## EMPHASIZING OUR STRENGTHS

### Dear Families and Community Members,

Do you ever catch yourself putting yourself down? Negative self-talk often goes unnoticed, but this habit can damage your self-esteem and set a poor example for those around you.

In this age of influencers, it's easy for us to look at ourselves and focus on where we fall short. But we all have something great to offer. It's important to shift your focus to your strengths, and to celebrate them regularly. Here's a chance for you and your child to take an inventory of your superpowers. Leverage your strengths and see how far they can take you.

### TALK ABOUT IT

You and your child can get into a positive mindset by trying these affirmations:

- One thing I've always been good at is [activity/skill].
- One thing I've learned to excel at is [activity/skill].
- To keep building my success, I can put [strategy, action, or attitude] in place.

Take turns answering these questions and respond to each other's answers. Then watch the intro video on the [Career Development](#) page. Point out that the video is a highlight reel of some cool things kids can see on Your <sup>🔥</sup>Job. Prompt discussion with the following:

- What would a highlight reel of your life look like?
- What do you hope a highlight reel of your future would show?

### TRY IT OUT

Now that you've identified your strengths, make reminders of them. Write sticky notes about your strengths and put them where you'll see them often. Think about what you are good at, what you are working hard at, and what you love about yourself.

After making a set for yourself, try making some for each other. You can adjust these and add to them over time.

Then turn these notes into daily affirmations that you can tell yourself in the mirror. Start with a call-and-response method to get your child comfortable. Pick several of their strengths and say them aloud as an "I am" statement (e.g., "I am a great friend"). Have your child repeat these to themselves in the mirror. Encourage them to start each day like this. See if you notice a change in your child's attitude—or even your own.



## WHAT PATHS CAN I TAKE?

### **Dear Families and Community Members,**

How much has the world changed since you were your child's age? With so much new and changing technology, it's easy to see why kids can feel overwhelmed. It's hard to think of a future in a world that may be totally different from today. But exploring careers can be exciting and fun if we view the unknowns as possibilities instead of hurdles. Let's take this opportunity to reframe our thinking when it comes to the future. Use the discussion prompts and activity below to help kids think about what might lie ahead.

### **TALK ABOUT IT**

Shifting their mindset from "What should I do?" to "What opportunities lie ahead?" can help kids recognize that choices are a good thing.

Talk to your young person about when you reached a fork in the road. Reflect on the following questions with them:

- How did it feel to have to make this decision?
- How did you decide what to do? Who helped you through it?
- Looking back, what effect did this turning point have on you in the long run?

Ask kids to talk about a time they had to make a tough decision. Discuss:

- What was one of the hardest decisions you ever had to make?
- Which trusted people in your life can help you work through tough decisions?

### **TRY IT OUT**

Play a game of "Would You Rather?" with your child. Each of you should have five to 10 index cards. On each, write a job-related "would you rather" question. Questions can range from: "Would you rather have a job in the city or on a farm?" to "Would you rather make a lot of money or help a lot of people?" As you play, discuss responses and keep track of the choices your child makes. Which decisions were most difficult for them to make?

Then you can each complete the Skills Explorer, on [Your <sup>🔥</sup>Job](#). Compare your results. Compare your results. Check out the "You might be a/an" cards to get a glimpse of salaries, educational suggestions, and job growth outlook for each. Turn the suggestions into "would you rather" questions to narrow down some of your options. But remind kids that their minds might change along the way.



# REAL TALK ABOUT REAL JOBS

## Dear Families and Community Members,

How did you learn about career options when you were growing up? Maybe you attended a Take Your Child to Work Day or helped your family at work. Maybe you had career fairs at school. Times have changed, and so have career opportunities. But one thing hasn't changed: Getting first-hand information about a job can bring opportunities into greater focus. It helps kids tell the difference between something that just sounds cool and something that could be a great match for them. Get kids thinking about real job opportunities using the content below.

## TALK ABOUT IT

Have a talk about the idea versus the reality of something. This talk doesn't have to be about jobs or careers, but if you do have a story that applies, share it. Then use the following prompts with your child:

- Describe a time you expected something to go well but that turned out to be disappointing or different than expected.
- Describe the opposite, a time when you had low expectations of something but were happily surprised.

This conversation is more about managing your expectations than about any specific topic. After sharing some stories, make a connection to career exploration and how a certain career path may turn out very differently than expected.

## TRY IT OUT

Give kids a chance to get some first-hand knowledge or experience of a career field. You can do this by connecting them with family or community members in different careers. Work with kids to come up with some questions they might want to ask about the job. You can search on [Your <sup>🔥</sup>Job](#) to see if this career has been covered on the site. If so, it might help your child think of some more questions they can ask.

See if they're able to shadow a worker for a day. This could create opportunities for volunteering or even mentorship. It's never too early to start making connections and getting experience.

Your young person might connect with a person or a job right away. Other explorations might fall flat. That's okay. The process can be full of both discoveries and dead ends. Getting comfortable with that will serve kids well, now and in the future.



# SKILLS, SKILLS, SKILLS

## Dear Families and Community Members,

What's the most difficult interview question you've had to answer? In career conversations, skills are one of the first things that come up. They're a key factor in deciding whether someone can do a job well. Often, though, the skills you talk about when trying to get a job are not actually job-specific. They might be more about how you relate to others or how efficiently you're able to solve problems.

Open kids' eyes to the wide variety of skills out there. Many translate across industries and opportunities. Set kids up for success by reminding them that while some skills come naturally, others can be learned. The ability to learn skills can be worth more than natural ease.

## TALK ABOUT IT

Choose an area or areas of your life where you feel successful. These can be creative projects, sports, friendship, even household tasks. Prompt discussion with the following questions:

- What's one success that you're proud of?
- What skills led to that success?
- What skill have you developed most over the last year?
- How have you developed that skill?

This exercise will help you connect your skills and your effort toward success. To extend this discussion, challenge kids to think about how the skills they mentioned might be used elsewhere. For example, if your child is proud of their skill at free throws in basketball, they might have great spatial awareness and an eye for design.

## TRY IT OUT

You and your young person are going to make a list of your own skills and each other's. As you do this, remember skills can be concrete (*"You are good at penalty kicks"*) or more abstract (*"I'm able to think of an issue from many angles"*). Important: You don't have to be expert-level to add a skill to your list.

Compare lists. Did your child say the same things about themselves that you said about them? Discuss where the overlap is. Explain any skills that you see that your child might have missed.

Pull up a description from a posting of a job similar to yours, or write a detailed description of your job for your child. Does your list of skills match those sought in the job description? Walk through it with your child. Then ask your child to name one job that interests them from the "My Feed" section of [Your 🔥 Job](#). Google a posting for that job. How do the necessary skills match your child's skill list?



## TIME MANAGEMENT

### Dear Families and Community Members,

You've heard the expression "Time is money." But let's consider what it means. Some say the phrase means that if you're wasting time, you're wasting opportunities to make money. Others say it highlights the value of time by equating it to money. Which do you agree with?

Of course, we all need a certain amount of money to live safe, stable, comfortable lives. But time also gives us the opportunity for enjoyment and relaxation. It lets us do what we want, instead of just what we need to do. Understanding how precious time is will help us make the most of the time we've got. This lesson is a valuable one throughout our lives.

### TALK ABOUT IT

A minute, an hour, a day. These measures of time are always the same, but they don't always feel that way. Get thinking more deeply about time by responding to the following questions with your kids:

- Does time seem to fly when you're having fun? Why do you think that is?
- During which activities do you lose track of time?
- Which tasks or activities seem to drag on forever? How can you make them more enjoyable?
- Do you think you're good at managing your time, or is this something you struggle with?

Our perception of time can play tricks on us, but becoming more aware of this helps us effectively manage our time to let us do everything we want and need to do.

### TRY IT OUT

Time check! This challenge will give you a better understanding of time.

1. Choose a fun task, such as jumping jacks, or use an idea from these [Minute to Win It](#)-inspired tasks.
2. Guess how many repetitions can be done in a minute.
3. Try it out.
4. Compare your estimate to the actual amount.

This isn't a competition. It's an experiment to see how well you can estimate tasks versus time. Like all skills, this one can be developed with practice.

Read the article "[A Day at Work: Software Engineers](#)" together. Point out the time stamps that Aliya Best includes. Challenge kids to make a breakdown of their own day, including chores, activities, and free time. See how closely their estimates match their real schedule.



## PROBLEM-SOLVING

### **Dear Families and Community Members,**

What was the biggest problem you ever faced, and how did you solve it? This is another common interview question. Your answer can tell an interviewer a lot about your mindset and your skill set.

Problems are not limited to work. They show up at home, at school, and with friends and family. As tempting as it might be to help our children solve the problems in their lives, it might be much more valuable to let them tackle their problems on their own.

Help them build the mindset to see themselves as capable and effective problem-solvers. Then you can step back, cheer them on, and watch them grow.

### **TALK ABOUT IT**

Discuss with your child:

- Who comes to mind when you think of an expert problem-solver?
- When was the last time you saw someone solve a problem in a creative way?
- What do you think makes a good problem-solver?
- How do you feel when something doesn't work out the first time you try it?

Remind kids that those expert problem-solvers are really no different than they are. The greatest problem-solvers do not have to be the smartest people. They just need to be flexible and persevere. Try asking the subjects of the [Ask Me Anything](#) section of Your <sup>🔥</sup>Job what their biggest challenge has been. Discuss how they dealt with these problems. Did they need to be flexible? Persistent? How might your child react in a similar situation?

### **TRY IT OUT**

Here's a fun game you can try with your young person, but it gets more fun with more players. This game will flex kids' creative problem-solving muscles. For this game, each person will need:

1. A piece of paper
2. A pen or pencil
3. A household object, like a paper clip or spatula
4. Something to conceal the object

Have each participant choose a concealed object, without knowing what it is. Set a timer for two minutes. At the start of two minutes, have each person uncover their object, then write a list of alternative ways to use it, instead of its intended purpose.

Share your results. Which ideas were most innovative? What was most difficult about this activity?

To encourage kids to work on their flexibility, have them try implementing one or two of their ideas. Was the tool actually appropriate for the job? How might you improve the tool? Remind kids that making mistakes and rerouting is a really important step in problem-solving.



# CONFLICT RESOLUTION

## Dear Families and Community Members,

It's a tough truth: wherever you have different people and different viewpoints, conflict is a possibility. Though uncomfortable, conflict can be an opportunity to build communication skills, strengthen relationships, and work on self-confidence. The easy way out might be to brush it under the rug. But, of course, this makes things more difficult in the long-term. Help your child learn to feel more comfortable speaking up and solving issues with others.

## TALK ABOUT IT

Find out how your child feels about and deals with conflict. Ask the following:

- How does it feel to be part of a conflict?
- What's your typical reaction to conflict? Do you walk away? Do you get involved? Do you get upset?
- What's a recent conflict you witnessed or were part of? How was it resolved? Was everyone happy with the outcome?

Then read "[How to Be an Upstanding Coworker](#)," and discuss some tips that Nadine Fonseca shares in the article. Which tips do kids think will be easiest for them to use? Which might be more challenging?

## TRY IT OUT

Using "I" statements is a productive way to help avoid escalating conflict. These statements enable you to share your feelings without placing blame. Here is a helpful pattern to follow:

1. State *how* you feel. ("I feel frustrated...")
2. Explain *what* has caused these feelings. ("When you interrupt me . . .")
3. Talk about *why* you feel that way. ("It seems like you don't care about what I have to say . . .")
4. Discuss *what* can be done differently. ("Can you please wait until I'm finished speaking, next time?")

Work with your child to come up with some scenarios that make them feel bad. Practice using "I" statements to resolve these feelings. You can use the [tip sheet from Boston University](#) for more practice.



# COMMUNICATION

## Dear Families and Community Members,

The complexity of our ability to communicate is uniquely human. Sometimes it can be difficult to say what we need to say. At other times, our expressions and body language communicate something we don't intend. How can we express ourselves effectively and appropriately? It starts with self-awareness: recognizing the ways in which we're most comfortable communicating. It also takes social awareness: understanding our audience and recognizing how people are responding to what we are saying. Use the activities below to get your child working to communicate better.

## TALK ABOUT IT

Communication skills are important when asking for help, coping with difficult emotions and situations, and getting to know and understand others. Discuss the following with your child:

- What things are you best at communicating?
- What things are difficult for you to communicate?
- Do you prefer communicating in writing, verbally, or through artistic expression?

Then read about a [pediatrician podcaster](#). Make connections back to communication:

- How does communication play a role in Lena van der List's job?
- Whom does she use her podcast to communicate and connect with?
- If you had a podcast, what would you want to communicate?

## TRY IT OUT

This activity will help kids understand how tone and body language can affect communication. You'll need two sets of index cards. On one set, you should write a variety of simple questions, such as "What do you like to eat for breakfast?" On the other set, you should write different moods, such as aggravated, cheerful, understanding, and disappointed.

Put the piles face down and have a partner choose one of each. They should ask the question in the mood selected. They can communicate the mood through their tone and body language.

The partner being asked the question should try to match the mood in their response. After each conversation, discuss which mood was being expressed, and how it felt to communicate with someone in that mood. Then switch roles.

Close out with a conversation about the most appropriate ways to communicate with others.



## COLLABORATION

### **Dear Families and Community Members,**

Does working with an ensemble excite you, or are you better as a solo act? Maybe you land somewhere in between. However you feel, the reality is that, at some point, most of us will be part of a team effort. The good news is that the most successful groups are made up of diverse talent. Getting to know what you bring to the table can help you feel more comfortable contributing to a group and may help you recognize different strengths in others.

### **TALK ABOUT IT**

How do your kids feel about being part of a team? Help them understand their feelings with the following questions:

- Do you enjoy working with others? Why or why not?
- Can you think of the most successful group you ever worked with? Why was it successful?
- What role do you like to play on a team?

Read about Romeo Crennel in [“A Coach Who Inspires.”](#) Talk about how a good coach can strengthen a team. Discuss:

- What traits do you think make a good coach?
- Whom do you know that would make a good coach?
- Do you think you would make a good coach? Why or why not?

### **TRY IT OUT**

Build your dream team. Ask your child to think of three or four people they would want on a team, but don't say what the team is for. Have your child name and identify some of the strengths of each person. They should include themselves on this list. Put together your own team, as well. After you've both made a dream team, name different scenarios and go through what role each person might play on this team. These scenarios can be anything from being deserted on an island to planning the world's best birthday party.

Then discuss the people you each included on your lists. Were these close friends? Family? After going through the scenarios, is there anyone different you might include? Remind kids that they do not always have a choice about who is on their team, but being able to identify people's strengths can help set everyone up for success.



## DEFINING SUCCESS

### **Dear Families and Community Members,**

How do you define success? Many gauges of success focus on external markers, such as money or prestige. That's an easy way to make success feel out of reach.

By expanding our idea of what success means, and personalizing it, we can make it easier to reach. We can also work against the belief that we need to compete with others for success. Then it can become something that feels good to share and celebrate with others.

## TALK ABOUT IT

Give your kids a broader definition of success by discussing the following:

- What is something you've been successful at in school?
- What activities or hobbies have you seen success in?
- What does a successful future look like to you?

Share your ideas of success for your child. Then read "[In the Face of Adversity](#)," from success coach from success coach DeVanté Starks, and talk about:

- Whom do you identify as a very successful person?
- How are adversity and success connected?
- When have you successfully overcome adversity?

## TRY IT OUT

Let's celebrate our small successes. Start each day or week with a goal-setting session with your child. Start small, with one or two goals. Write these somewhere that you'll be reminded of them often.

At the end of the day or the week, have a "success ceremony." This is where you talk about the goals you've reached and celebrate them. This can mean anything from giving each other high-fives to having a dance party.

Someone didn't reach their goals? That's okay. Have a discussion about what prevented them from reaching their goal. Roll it over into the next day or week and try again. After a while, kids can start setting larger goals that take a little more time. This will build healthy habits for the future.



# NAVIGATING CHANGE AND ADVERSITY

## Dear Families and Community Members,

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, “There is nothing permanent except change.” It’s true: Change is happening to us and around us, always. Often it brings amazing things. But change brings challenges, too, and requires you to adapt to new realities. Change happens whether we choose to embrace it or try to avoid it. But the more we’re able to accept that change and adversity are a part of life, the better our chances at rebounding when we encounter them.

## TALK ABOUT IT

Have a discussion about a change your child has recently faced or will soon face. This can be anything from starting a new school year to choosing a different sport from what their friends are playing. While change brings the opportunity to start something new, it also means the end of something. Sometimes, you need to mourn what is being left behind in order to prepare for what comes next. Take this conversation as slowly as necessary.

- What was a big change you went through or will go through soon?
- What do you miss or will you miss about how things were before?
- What good has come from this change or what benefits do you expect?

## TRY IT OUT

Recognize that change can be difficult, even if it is positive. Read “[When ‘Happy’ Doesn’t Cut It](#)” together and discuss why looking on the bright side is not always the best advice in tough times. Have your child reflect on what is best for them in times of change and adversity.

First, have them make a list of people they feel comfortable talking to when times get tough. Have them reflect about what these people offer them. An ear? Words of encouragement? Advice?

Then have kids think about which type of response they prefer. Sometimes, you just want to vent. Sometimes, you’re confused and need some life lessons. Grab some index cards and markers. Together, create cue cards that kids can use in these moments that will help them express what they need. Examples include: “I need a shoulder to cry on” and “I need to be left alone for a while.” Encourage kids to keep these handy to flip through when they’re dealing with change or tough times.