

# UW TACOMA'S FIRST GEN FAMILY FORUM



## Importance of Career Exploration in Middle School

Middle school marks an important developmental stage characterized by big physical, emotional, and cognitive changes. Teens begin to discover themselves and grapple with independence and forming their own identity. They also begin to develop new interests which makes it an ideal time to begin to explore potential career paths. Middle school career exploration can help kids better understand all of their possibilities earlier. Studies have shown the academic performance of 8th graders has a more significant impact on the student's college and career readiness than any experience or skills they may gain in high school.



education  
vision  
skills  
**career**  
interests  
values  
goals




## How can you help?

Talk to your child about the following topics:

- interests and passions
- activities they enjoy
- values
- strong beliefs

Discuss how all of these can be connected to the career choices one makes.



WHAT'S  
YOUR  
HOBBY?



## Explore Career Paths

Children are often aware of more traditional jobs such as teacher, lawyer, police officer, doctor, etc. However there are many jobs that your child may not know about. Talk with your child and identify various careers that align with their interests and values. As the workplace continues to evolve, it will be important to focus on groups of similar skills and how they can be transferred from one job to another.



## Check out Washington Career Bridge

Washington Career Bridge is a **FREE** tool for those looking to make informed decisions about their career path and further their education. Students can take a quiz to see which career fits best with their interests and then explore different colleges and universities that will allow them to earn the education necessary for their career of choice.

[Click here to explore WA Career Bridge](#)



Looking to get your child connected to expanded learning opportunities and youth programming in Tacoma and Pierce County? Take a look at Tacoma Learns which is an online directory of out of school and summer learning programs.

<https://www.tacomalearns.org/>



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