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Lesson Plans & Parents Guide

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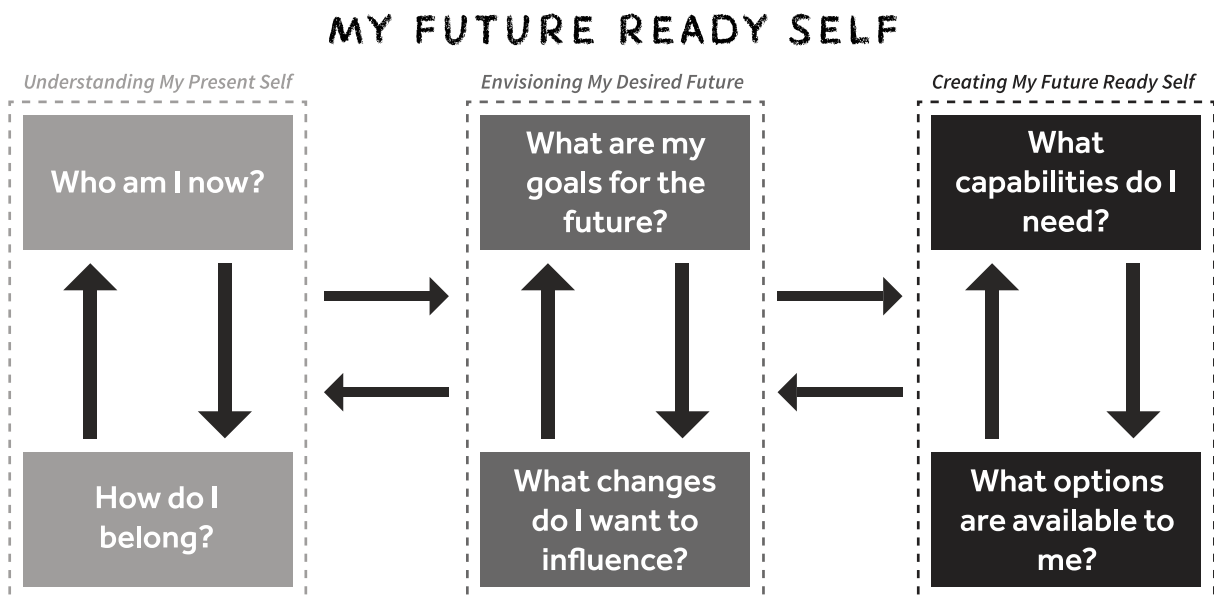
PARENT GUIDE

As a parent, you play a particularly important role in helping your child to determine who they want to become and the impact that they want to have.

Many times, our conversations with our children about the future focus on what they want to be when they grow up. The unintended consequence is that it immediately limits the universe of possibilities to those that are well understood by the child and their guardian. Further, an unintended implication is that children should dedicate themselves to becoming one single thing. This is as ingrained in family dialogue as it is in our school system.

The question, *What are you passionate about?* has become a popular mantra in education. Youth are encouraged to follow their passion and align their purpose to their passion. The challenge here is that youth have a scope of experiences that may limit their ability to accurately identify what they are truly passionate about. Further, passions change as children and adults are exposed to different subjects, adventures and experiences.

This Starter Guide offers five tips for parents that encourage the type of thinking and dialogue necessary for youth to become future ready and to shift the dialogue from what they want to be to who they want to become.



TIPS FOR PARENTS:

1. CENTER CONVERSATIONS ON GOAL-SETTING AND ENGAGE POSITIVELY WITH RESPONSES;

- Discuss school subjects and activities that your child is interested in and why;
- Make a list with your child about their strengths and what they believe they are good at;
- Begin a conversation about different careers and activities related to their interests and strengths and help them to explore online or at the library;
- Encourage them to set both short term and long-term goals;
- Help them to break the achievement of goals into milestones and manageable chunks;
- Discuss your own (personal and professional) goals for the future;
- Set family goals and work towards achieving them.

2. DISCUSS THE CHALLENGES FACING YOUR FAMILY, LOCAL COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL COMMUNITY;

- Speak openly as you deal with daily challenges;
- Discuss news clips appropriate to your child's age and encourage dialogue around cause, impact and possible solutions;
- Observe and discuss local community issues. Is there a lot of litter in the park? Does a local community centre need toys? Examine why this may be the case and engage in solution-focused dialogue.

3. ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE AND PURPOSE ACTIVITIES;

- Cleaning litter in a local park, building awareness around an issue, donating books to the library or canned goods to a local food bank are different ways a child can help in their community and this can encourage dialogue around different challenges people may face;
- Share ways you have engaged or currently engage with the community and the impact that you want to have;

- Discuss different ways your child can get involved at school and in their community;
- Introduce them to community mentors (e.g. local business owners, members of local government, coaches, volunteers, mailperson, pharmacist, etc.).

4. INVOLVE CHILDREN IN DECISION MAKING.

- Allow them to make age appropriate decisions (what to wear to school, what book to read before bed, etc.);
- Share your thinking process as you make decisions, modelling both the how, the what and the why of your choices;
- Encourage them to develop and suggest solutions to the challenges that they encounter at home, school and the wider community;
- Help your child to take responsibility for their actions.

5. ACTIVELY LISTEN.

- Stop what you are doing (or put the phone away) to listen or suggest a time for conversation when you can devote your full attention;
- Listen without interruption or judgement;
- Offer more questions than answers, encouraging your child to generate their own solutions;
- Ask open-ended questions;
- Make eye contact with your child so they feel a strong sense of connection.

Finally, familiarizing yourself with the framework will help you to shift the conversation away from a discussion of career types and titles to one of self-understanding, trust and confidence. The framework can assist you to develop the vocabulary and human-centered style of questioning that breaks concepts like passion and purpose into smaller and more meaningful ideas and experiences for your child. It will encourage them to think about who they are and the future they want to create for themselves.