

So how can you support your child in this learning?

1. **Create a schedule with your teen** so that the expectations of home, school and work can all be met without undue stress. Ensure that family time is part of that schedule. That time for connection is vital and can get lost in the business of everything else.

2. **Place boundaries around what earning can be spent on.** Yes, it is their money, but they are still expected to conform to family values and standards. I would also set a percentage for savings. Even if this is minimal, it helps to create a healthy habit for the future.

3. **Keep in contact with school.** If working is adversely affecting study, hours may need to be adjusted. That will teach your child that we all have limits on what we can achieve in a week. It also will emphasise for them that a process of prioritising is essential.

4. **Debrief about work with your child.**

What are the best and worst parts of their role? What went really well, what went badly? Help them problem solve. This is a great opportunity to teach them how to deal with difficult people, awkward situations and problem solving. If appropriate, share some of the problems you have at your work and explain how you deal with them. This is important role modelling and they can use the input in their own interactions.

Be encouraging and supportive. This is a rite of passage, a step into the adult world. Enjoy it with them.



Tools that will allow you to grow and flourish



Supporting WA school communities

YouthCARE Chaplains care for the social emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing of students, families and staff in public school communities throughout Western Australia. This support helps students achieve their potential, both academically and in their social and family lives.

Chaplains are qualified in pastoral care and youth work. They respect all people, no matter who they are, where they're from or what their personal belief system is. If asked to do so, chaplains will discuss spiritual matters with a person, in a way that best serves that person.

Cheers

Deb Crilly

Chaplain

C H O I C E ' s



Tools for Life



Learning to live life well

We all have choices. Sometimes we do not like the choices we need to make. It would be a mistake though to believe one does not have a choice just because they do not like the choice they might need to make. To do so leaves one feeling powerless and helpless.

OUR KIDS NEED JOBS AND THIS IS WHY -

I got my first proper holiday job at 14. It was in the women's clothing department of a store in the small town where I lived. I'm sure it was illegal to employ a 14 year old in Australia, but nobody seemed to care, least of all me. I loved it. I loved the other staff, I loved the money and most of all, I loved feeling grown up.

I've had worse jobs since then, mainly in filthy bars in faraway countries, and I've had better jobs, but that is the one I remember most fondly. It was the education I got when I wasn't at school. I think most kids would benefit from a part-time job while they're at school.

I know many parents want to preserve their kids' time for homework, study and co-curricular activities. I get their concerns. Kids are busy. However, the soft skills they learn in a job are as important as the skills they learn at school. Yes, school will teach you Physics and Economics and Literature, but a job will teach you punctuality, interpersonal skills, time management and the art of being reliable. These are not only useful in the general business of being a human, they are highly marketable in the future.

A boss is an adult who sees you as an employee first and an adolescent second. Parents and teachers treat kids like...kids. It's our job to look after them and love them. Not so an employer. An employer has expectations and demands and rules. And low and behold, your child will find they are not central to their

universe. Bosses get cross when things go badly, they don't care that you're having a down day and they are not going to tolerate an iPhone stealing your attention. That



said, they also have an opportunity to mentor, teach and be another significant adult in a teenager's life. I like the idea of kids getting bad jobs. They are a great equaliser and they teach empathy. Nobody should be above flipping burgers or cleaning up after others. There is a perspective that comes with scraping trodden-in gum off a shop floor, that a lot of life will not provide. The more privileged a child, the less glamorous their job should be. Richard Branson sold Christmas trees as a kid, Oprah worked in a supermarket. Dealing with customers and showing respect when you're screaming inside is the stuff character is made of.



It is good for a child's sense of place in the wider world to have a job. It shows them that we all have a role to play and that we all have an important niche. That sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves contributes to a child's resilience. It also gives them confidence, a sense of responsibility and independence. They meet people and make friends outside of school. That variety in friendship groups can be vital. When kids are connected 7 hours a day to their school friends in real time and then via technology outside of school, friendship issues can be all encompassing. If there are issues in those relationships, they are made less dramatic when they have friends in other contexts.

We are getting closer and closer to a cash-free economy. Over 50% of all transactions in Australia are done by card or app. The 2015 Westpac Cash Free Report says that we could be cash free as soon as 2022. However, a society without cash makes it harder to teach kids the value of money. You know what does teach them the value of money?

Getting a job! If a child has to work for five hours to afford a new shirt or a computer game, they quickly see the value of money. Not only does a job give a teen money to buy the things they want, it is also the beginning of an education in managing their own finances.

Having a job forces a teenager to manage their time effectively. This might be why a Boston University study found that students who worked 10 hours a week achieved higher grades than those who did not. Students who worked 20 hours achieved poorer grades. It makes sense. 10 hours is enough to make you organise your time and get things done. More than that forces work to compete with study instead of complimenting it. The time spent in employment also avoids time spent available for high risk behaviours.

I remember my first pay packet. It was in the days when you lined up to see the pay master and you got cash in an envelope. I viewed it with pride and as an accomplishment. True, after work I accidentally left it in a phone box and never saw it again, but...you get the point. It's about independence and it's a rite of passage. So many rites of passage have been lost. We have removed a lot of risk from kids' lives; we don't let them ride their bikes to school or go into city centres alone. Work allows kids to take a tangible step up from child to adulthood in a safe environment. They have to fix problems without the help of parents or teachers and they are accountable.

Although there are many benefits to working for teenagers, they are still young and they will need support and guidance in managing themselves, their time and the potential issues that might arise via their interactions with others.

