

PARENTS E-GUIDE

BOOSTING WELL-BEING
THROUGH MEANINGFUL
CAREER DISCUSSIONS
WITH YOUR TEENAGER

2017 **YOUTH CENSUS**
FINDINGS



INTRODUCTION

What do you want for your child? If you are like most parents then the answer might include, "I want my child to: be happy, be safe, feel confident, know their place in the world, follow their dreams and flourish". Yet the reality is that many parents are raising their children in ways that are incongruent with the end goal.

New Skillsroad research found that while most parents subscribe to a parenting model of wanting their child to be happy and have the best possible life, most youth in Australia are not thriving, instead they are simply just doing okay. So what's going wrong and how do we make it right?

Danielle Buckley
Registered Psychologist

FLOURISHING FAMILIES –

WHY ARE KIDS JUST DOING OKAY?

When it comes to nurturing your child to have a good life and pursue a path that promotes happiness and well-being, it's important to invest in focusing on the right things. However, many people strive for things that will not lead them to living a happy life. It is now well researched that individuals who place high importance on extrinsic compared to intrinsic goals report lower levels of life satisfaction.

Extrinsic goals are goals that are typically driven by consumer culture such as the pursuit of money, status and image. People who aspire to these goals are often found to be less happy, have less positive emotions, gravitate to alcohol & drug use, have more physical symptoms of illness and are more narcissistic. Interestingly, in the Skillsroad research, many young Australians were focusing on extrinsic goals when it came to career choices, employment choices and even their personal fears about growing up. This is bad news for kids, parents and future employers! As parents are often the most trusted advisors for their children in terms of seeking support and guidance, parents must know how to make sure they are guiding their child to live a 'good' life, not a 'goods' life if they truly want them to be happy.

TO 'LIKE' OR NOT 'LIKE'

As technology continues to inform the way we work, live and play, being a subject of consumer culture commences at birth. But there are ways we can make sure our children develop a strong sense of self as they navigate their way from school and into the world of work. Ever wonder where children get their habits from when it comes to screen use? As many social media sites like Facebook and Instagram rely on 'likes' human beings become addicted to the dopamine response that activates the reward system in our brain. Having someone 'like' something we post makes us feel good and we keep going back for more. As parents, we need to have this conversation with our children and talk to them about how it feels, but also that 'liking' a picture or post is very different from liking a person.

Discouraging our children's digital literacy would be damaging for their future. Teaching children about the impact of technology is a better conversation, particularly if we want to raise children who are aware of a consumer culture, and can monitor their prescription to it. This is also important for parents as children must learn external validation does not bring happiness.

TALKING AND LISTENING

How long would you spend, one on one with your child/children each week? When you are together what do you talk about? What do you notice? Many

parents are experts at labelling and creating a narrative for their children that begins at birth, "They are the creative one", "they will be into sports", "they are the smart one so they will probably become a doctor". These labels are really unhealthy for our children.

Having open conversations with children about what they are interested in and passionate about, or talking about things they love promotes curiosity and confidence in children. It gets children thinking about what is possible early on. By doing this from an early age, parents give permission for their child to pursue paths that are meaningful and interesting.

WHAT MAKES THEM, AND YOU, HAPPY?

Money doesn't buy happiness. Where does your child get their idea of happiness from? What is happiness to you? In the Skillsroad 2017 Youth Census report, many were worried about body image and would choose a career based on salary above other things. Finding the time to talk about the meaning of happiness, as being one that comes from positive relationships, positive emotion, meaning, engagement, accomplishment and health, will help guide your child to focus on happiness as being something that comes from within not extrinsic goals.

Download the Skillsroad 2017 Youth Census today at www.skillsroad.com.au/youth-census/historical-reports/download-historical-reports

CAREER CONVERSATIONS – HOW TO MASTER MEANINGFUL CAREER DISCUSSIONS

When it comes to helping our children flourish as they enter the workforce, it's important that parents help their children find careers they are interested in, motivated by and passionate about.

The following are two tools available at skillsroad.com.au free of charge, that parents can use to help facilitate career conversations that will ensure their child is pursuing a pathway because they want to, rather than for extrinsic reasons.

TAKE THE CAREER QUIZ

Where do you start when you want to have a discussion about career choices? How often do you have a conversation with your child/children where you spend most of the time listening and asking questions, instead of telling them what you think they should do?

When it comes to starting these discussions, one of the most important places to start is getting to know what environments your child will flourish in.

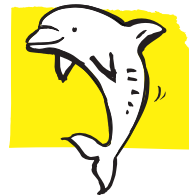
The Skillsroad Career Quiz has been designed and based on the skill clusters identified in The Foundation for Young Australians research. The purpose of the Career Quiz is to help youth identify their skillset as well as their ideal work environments to start planning their pathway and entry into the workforce.

Building on the research from The Foundation for Young Australians, the quiz includes seven different skill sets. These are:



THE "GO-GETTER"

These are jobs that require a high level of interpersonal interactions such as sales, retail, hospitality and entertainment.



THE "PROFESSIONAL"

Jobs that involve professionals providing information, education or business services.



THE "DESIGNER"

Jobs that involve deploying skills and knowledge of science and math to construct or engineer products or buildings.



THE "TECHIE"

Jobs that require understanding and manipulation of technology.



THE "CARER"

Jobs that seek to improve the mental health, physical health or wellbeing of others, including medical care and personal support services.



THE "HANDICRAFTER"

Jobs that require manual tasks related to construction, production, maintenance or technical customer service.



THE "CO-ORDINATOR"

Jobs that involve repetition, administration and behind the scenes processes or services.



Take the test with your child and then try answering some of the coaching questions below:

- Were you surprised by the skillset you got? If so, why?
- What skillset do you think your parents are and why?
- What career pathways come to mind when you think about your skills?
- If you woke up tomorrow and had your dream job, what sort of environment would you see yourself working in?
- Do you know any people that have careers that sound interesting to you? If so, what is appealing about that career?

Find out more about the Skillsroad Career Quiz here:
www.skillsroad.com.au/career-quiz

The Skillsroad Career Quiz has been developed by a registered psychologist based upon principles of Elias Porter theory. Skillsroad does not warrant that the results of the Career Quiz are accurate. Please seek independent advice from a suitably qualified practitioner.

THE JOB FIT TEST

It's important that young people are open to career possibilities but also have a realistic view of what various pathways involve. The Skillsroad Job Fit Test allows young people to select a career option and assesses their suitability to the role.

They do this by answering a series of questions which looks at their skills and assess the level of understanding they have about workplace behaviour and conduct. If there are certain areas they need to improve on, the test results will serve up suggestions and tips to work on!

The second part of the quiz allows them to select up to five careers that interest them from a selection of 300. They will then answer job specific questions around their interests, qualifications and skills to see how suited they are to the particular jobs.



Once you have used the Skillsroad Job Fit Test with your child, try some coaching questions below:

- After reading the descriptions, what job seems the most exciting to you?
- Do you have any reservations about any of the roles? If so, why?
- Did you notice any surprises in your results?
- What else do you think you need to do to learn more about different jobs?
- What job do you think will bring you the most happiness and why?
- What's the hardest part about choosing a career?

Find out more about the Skillsroad Job Fit Test here

www.skillsroad.com.au/job-fit

This guide has been designed to help you help your child/children to create a flourishing life, both at home and as they transition into the workplace. In addition to this there are a host of resources on Skillsroad for you to explore and play with.