ARE YOU MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS?

This workshop encourages students to think about how the decisions they make today influence their entire lives. It introduces a five-step problem-solving model that students can use for any important decision.

OUTCOME
Students will be able to describe how setting goals and taking action will make a difference in planning for college and turning their aspirations into college attendance and success.

WORKSHOP LENGTH
60 – 65 minutes

LEARNING TARGETS
- Decision-making/reasoning skills
- Goal setting
- Follow through

ALTERNATIVE LESSON WITH FEWER TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
- Sparking the Future
  Education After High School: Keeping Your Options Open, Grades: 7-9, Lesson: 2

ASSESSMENTS/EVALUATIONS
The number of students who can describe how they will apply the five step decision-making model to the development of their career plan.

MATERIALS OR RESOURCES NEEDED
- What other advice do you have for students?
  Noah, Cynthia
ARE YOU MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS?

WORKSHOP AGENDA

Introduction: .......................................................................................................................... 10 – 15 minutes
- Share with students that everyone has to make choices and decisions. Some of these decisions are short-term and immediate. Other decisions are long-term and can make a difference in your entire life. Brainstorm with students a list of both short-term and long-term decisions.
- The KnowHow2Go videos set up the discussion about the right kinds of decisions students need to be making. The first video from USA Funds talks about how important it is to set goals. Each of the participants, Noah, Cynthia, and Marcus talk about the decisions they needed to make early in their high school career to get ready for college.
  - What other advice do you have for students? Noah, Cynthia

Whole Group Student Engagement: .................................................................................. 30 minutes
- Talk with students about how they make decisions. Ask them to describe the steps they go through to make decisions. The responses are likely to vary from student to student.
  - Define the problem and set a goal for change.
  - Brainstorm options.
  - Evaluate options or put them in priority.
  - Make a plan of action.
  - Evaluate and change where needed.
- Model or walk-through a decision that interests the whole group. If you are working with a large group, you might consider dividing students into small groups.
- Go back to the steps in Get Ready (KnowHow2Go) for freshmen/sophomores. Ask the students to think about the decisions they will need to make at each step of the way.

Individual Student Engagement: ...................................................................................... 10 minutes
Give each student time to fill out the worksheet on decisions and plans. Encourage students to be prepared to share their plans with at least one other student.

Closing: ............................................................................................................................... 10 minutes
Ask students to share with the group or one other student an important decision they are going to have to make and the process they will use to ensure they are making the right decision for themselves.
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ASSESSMENT OF WORKSHOP

Purpose(s):
- To determine if students can describe and apply the five-step decision-making process.
- To determine if students understand how setting goals and taking personal action will make a difference in planning for college.

Format: Student worksheet.

Facilitator Directions:
- Make copies of the worksheet (assessment) for each student. Another option is to put the questions into a PowerPoint or use on a document camera to discuss the questions.

- Make sure students know that they are not “graded” on the worksheet nor are there absolute right or wrong answers. The purpose of the worksheet is to help them reflect and to determine what they understand. Share that you will use the information to plan future information and workshops.

- Give students time as part of the Individual Student Engagement to complete the worksheet.

- Discuss the answers in the Closing.

- Have students turn in the worksheet at the end of class. Review student responses and use this information to determine whether the group is on track or whether you need to add more information at this point.

- Return the worksheet to students at the beginning of the next class to be kept in their portfolios.
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WORKSHOP ASSESSMENT TOOL

Now that you have explored a decision-making process, read the steps from KnowHow2Go, Get Ready. Answer the following questions as completely as you can. Be prepared to share your answers with your group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KnowHow2Go Get Ready Step</th>
<th>What are the problems, challenges, or goals for change?</th>
<th>Decisions I Will Need to Make</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan out Your Classes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File Important Documents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find Out About Which Colleges to Attend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Take Honors-Level Classes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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FOLLOW-UP LESSONS

- **Education After High School: Keeping Your Options Open**
  - Sparking the Future Lesson Plans – OSPI
  - Education After High School: Keeping Your Options Open, Grades: 7-9, Lesson: 2
  - **Lesson Goals:**
    - Learn about family wage jobs.
    - Understand the need to work hard in middle and high school to prepare for a postsecondary education.
  - **Lesson Description:**
    - The lesson asks students to think about how much money they will need to support themselves and perhaps a family after high school. Focusing on the family-wage job, the lesson uses hands-on activities encouraging students to think about what the decisions they want to make now.

- **Knowing Yourself: Six Steps to Success**
  - Sparking the Future Lesson Plans – OSPI
  - Knowing Yourself: Six Steps to Success, Grades: 7 – 9, Lesson: 4
  - **Lesson Goals:**
    - Introduce the six character traits most important to student success at school and at work.
    - Help students explore their own values around these character traits.
  - **Lesson Description:**
    - The lesson encourages students to explore what they value. Through activities and discussion, students define commitment, confidence, courage, creativity, determination, and integrity.
LEARNING GOALS:

- Students will define a family wage job.
- Students will describe the postsecondary requirements for different family wage jobs.
- Students will list the work they are doing in school to prepare for a postsecondary education.

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS:

- **Essential Academic Learning Requirements Grade 8 Grade-Level Expectations:** This lesson is aligned with Communication 1.1.2, Writing 2.4.1, and Educational Technology 1.3.2. Students will listen and observe to gather and interpret information. They will find, select and synthesize information from an online career database to understand the postsecondary requirements for different family wage jobs.

- **Common Core State Standards Grade 8:** This lesson is aligned with English Language Arts Speaking and Listening 1c. Students will respond to questions about family wage jobs and postsecondary requirements with relevant information.

- **American School Counselor Association National Standards:** This lesson is aligned with ASCA Career B1.5, C1.1, and Personal & Social B1.9. Students will organize and apply career information from an online database and will articulate why they will need to balance school, studies, extracurricular activities, leisure time, and family life. They will identify personal short- and long-term goals.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Family Wage Jobs Quiz Handout (in this lesson plan – one copy for each student).
- Internet access (for each student or group).
- Family Wage Jobs Answer Key (in this lesson plan – print one for teacher).
- Keeping Your Options Open (final page of this lesson plan – for students).

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

1. **Introduce the family wage job.** Ask students what they think a family wage job is. The answer is obvious: it’s a job that pays enough to support a family! But, what does that
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mean? Ask students to calculate what someone earning the minimum wage ($9.32 for Washington state, 2014) would make for one week, one month, or one year of work. Is that enough to pay rent? Enough to afford a car? Then explain that most jobs that pay more than minimum wage require some level of education or training after high school. (10-15 minutes)

2. Explore family wage facts. Distribute the Family Wage Jobs Quiz and have students complete the first section, working in small groups. Stop them and check answers – all are true. Discuss why this is the case and why a college education is important. Then have them complete the second section. To save time, you might want to assign each small group to research one career and then have the groups share their information, with students completing their own worksheets based on the reports of the other groups. Ask students if they were surprised about what they learned. (15-20 minutes)

3. Discuss keeping options open. Students may think they’re a long way from high school – or college – but the work they do today matters. Distribute the Tips for Keeping Your Options Open handout. Review it with students and ask them to share it with their families. (10 minutes)

STUDENT PRODUCTS:

- Family Wage Jobs Quiz. Each student should complete a quiz.
- Keeping Your Options Open Handout. Each student should complete a checklist.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The following resources are helpful for middle school and early high school students to share with their families, to learn more about postsecondary and career options.

- Education Planner
- Mapping your Future
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Family Wage Jobs Quiz

WHY DO YOU NEED MORE THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA?
TEST YOUR CAREER KNOWLEDGE!

Name _____________________________

PART A: Answer these questions. Give yourself 10 points for every correct answer.

Your Score  T or F?

____________  ____________  1. Most family wage jobs require education or training after high school.

____________  ____________  2. Just one year of education or training after high school can increase your lifetime earnings.

____________  ____________  3. On average, college graduates have lower rates of unemployment than high school graduates.

____________  ____________  4. College graduates have more jobs to choose from.

TOTAL SCORE: ____________  What did you learn? Take notes on the back of the sheet.

PART B: Go to Career Ship® and fill in the missing information about each career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAREER</th>
<th>POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION NEEDED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction Carpenter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Practical Nurse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Support Specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Engineer</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
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Family Wage Jobs Quiz

ANSWER KEY

PART A: Answer these questions. Give yourself 10 points for every correct answer.

Your Score  T or F?

_________ T  1. Most family wage jobs require education or training after high school.

_________ T  2. Just one year of education or training after high school can increase your lifetime earnings.

_________ T  3. On average, college graduates have lower rates of unemployment than high school graduates.

_________ T  4. College graduates have more jobs to choose from.

TOTAL SCORE: ____________ What did you learn? Take notes on the back of the sheet.

PART B: Go to Career Ship® and fill in the missing information about each career.

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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Apprenticeship of up to one year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Practical Nurse</td>
<td>1-2 years of training or an associate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Support Specialist</td>
<td>1-2 years of training or an associate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
<td>4-year bachelor’s degree (less training may be OK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Engineer</td>
<td>4-year bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Keeping Your Options Open

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

What you do today matters! Your work during middle school and high school will set your path for the future. Here are a few tips to help you keep your options open so that you can achieve your dreams. Share these tips with your family. Check off each one that you can do.

WORK HARD IN SCHOOL

- Attend class every day and make sure you’re prepared.
- Pay attention during class.
- Join in class discussions. Show your teachers what you know!
- Ask questions. If you don’t understand something, be sure to ask about it.
- Keep up with your assignments. Set a schedule for big projects and do a little every day.
- Check your assignments before turning them in to make sure they’re correct.
- Study with a friend or a tutor if you do better working with others.
- Find a quiet, organized place to study.

GET INVOLVED

- Join at least one activity at school that interests you.
- Find out if you can volunteer at school – to help a teacher or tutor a younger student.
- Get involved in activities and organizations in your neighborhood.

EXPLORE YOUR INTERESTS

- Start thinking about what you’d like to do when you grow up.
- Learn about career possibilities.
- Read something every day: newspapers, blogs, books, or magazines.
- Talk with your family and your advisor about your goals and dreams for your career.

LEARN HOW TO GET FROM HERE … TO YOUR FUTURE

Here are a few web sites that will help you plan the steps you should take between now and your high school graduation. Explore these sites on your own or with your family.

- **Education Planner.** You can take a quiz about your learning style and personality type, learn about interesting careers, and find out what education you’ll need
- **Mapping Your Future.** With this site you can play “Show Me the Future,” and learn what you’ll need to do to get from here to there
LEARNING GOALS:

- Students will identify careers based on the tasks performed by people in those careers.
- Students will describe how their interests relate to careers.

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS:

- **Essential Academic Learning Requirements Grade 8 Grade Level Expectations:** This lesson is aligned with Communication 1.1.2 and Writing 2.2.1 and 3.2.2. Students will use listening and observation skills to interpret information. They will write in a specific format following a specific prompt and will use appropriate terminology and language.

- **Common Core State Standards Grade 8:** This lesson is aligned with English Language Arts Writing 4, Language 6, and Speaking and Listening 1b. Students will produce clear and coherent writing based on a specific prompt and using appropriate, domain-specific language. They will follow rules for collegial discussions in a small group.

- **American School Counselor Association National Standards:** This lesson is aligned with ASCA Academic C1.6 and Personal & Social A1.2 and B1.9. Students will learn about how school success and academic achievement enhance future career and vocational opportunities. They will identify values, attitudes, and beliefs, and will identify short- and long-term goals.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Six Steps to Success Handout *(included in this lesson plan – one for each student)*
- Writing Exercise on Character Traits *(final page of lesson plan)*

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

1. **Introduce the six “success” traits.** Write these words on the board: **Commitment, Confidence, Courage, Creativity, Determination, Integrity.** What do they mean? Why are they important? Help students define and discuss why they are important traits to exhibit at school – and why they might be important traits on the job. Do students value these traits in themselves? Why or why not? Ask students to name historical figures to illustrate each trait. *(5-10 minutes)*
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2. **Explore the six “success” traits.** Distribute the Six Steps to Success Handout and ask students to work in small groups to complete it. Assign each group one of the traits for the final two questions on the handout. Let them discuss their answers in their small groups. If you have time, bring the discussion back to your full group. (15-20 minutes)

3. **Begin the writing exercise.** The Writing Exercise on Character Traits helps students explore their values – and the character traits necessary to succeed in the world. Use your remaining time during this lesson to assign the writing exercise… or partner with a language arts teacher to extend this lesson in a language arts class. (5 minutes)

**STUDENT PRODUCTS:**

- **Six Steps to Success Handout.** Each student should complete a handout.
- **Writing Exercise on Character Traits.** If desired, each student should complete the writing exercise.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Many of the six “success” traits can be developed by serving others. Help students learn more about the value of volunteer service through Learn and Serve America

Help them use the library or Internet to research the valuable character traits listed over 200 years ago by Ben Franklin.
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Six Steps to Success

WHAT ARE THE SIX “SUCCESS” TRAITS?
LEARN HOW TO SUCCEED AT SCHOOL & WORK!

Name _____________________________

Following your group discussion, please write a definition for each of the six “success” traits.

Commitment

Confidence

Courage

Creativity

Determination

Integrity

Circle the trait above that your advisor has asked your group to report on. Please answer the following questions based on this character trait.

Explain why this trait is important to have as a student. How does it help you at school?

How would a student demonstrate this trait? Describe one example.
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Character Traits

Writing Exercise
Describe Your Path to Success

Name _____________________________

Use the space provided below to write down your thoughts on ONE of the following writing prompts. Use the back of this sheet or a computer to write your final response.

Write four words that describe something good about you. Explain how one of those words relates to the six “success” character traits and how that character trait applies to you. Describe how you have exhibited this character trait.

Do you have a hero? Who is that person and what character traits make you look up to him or her? Describe how this person has modeled at least one of the six character traits discussed during this lesson.