

Parents' Guide

For

IN SEARCH OF A COLLEGE MAJOR & CAREER DIRECTION (DVD)



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Susan Posluszny is a career counselor, coach, and trainer with a private practice in New Boston, New Hampshire, called **OPTIONS for Career and Life Planning**. Along with 18 years of experience as the Director of the Career Center at Rivier College, Susan's background includes corporate experience in outplacement and human resource management. Since 1984, Susan has provided tools and services to guide thousands of teens and adults with academic and career decisions. While working in higher education, Susan developed an award winning video which was sought after by colleagues from across the nation. Susan is a Nationally Certified Counselor and a Master Career Counselor member of the National Career Development Association. She holds an undergraduate degree in Business Administration from Montclair State University and a Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology from Seton Hall University. Susan resides in New Boston, New Hampshire with her husband and son.

About Your Role

Research indicates that parents are the number one influence in the career choices made by their students.

Yes, you influence your student's career decisions in many ways...in ways that are subtle, and beyond your level of awareness, and in ways that are not so subtle. Given the important role that you play in this exploration and decision making process, I developed this Parents' Guide to support **you** in supporting your child as s/he goes through my DVD program. Now you might be a guardian, relative or adult mentor rather than a 'parent' in the traditional sense, but, for ease of writing purposes, I will use the term 'parent' when referring to readers of this Guide. The program participant may be a teenager or young adult who is not currently in school but is preparing for or considering going to college. Once again, to facilitate writing efforts, I will use the term 'student' when referencing program participants.



Before your student goes through the program, I invite you to scan the student User Guide and watch the DVD so you have a sense of the program. By doing so, you'll be able to reinforce the advice offered and support your student as needed. This program consists of six mini menu segments with segments 2 - 6 featuring guided activities to be completed by your student. One segment builds on the next and the program is self paced so your student can take the time needed to complete a segment before moving on to the next one.

Like anything else in life, your student will get out of this program what he or she puts into it. Bottom line...it's important to consider your student's personality, maturity, level of motivation, and any special circumstances that could impact on the process.

Next I'll give you an overview of the program, including my reasoning behind each DVD segment, and some ways in which you can support your child through the program and beyond. The segments are as follows:

IN SEARCH OF A COLLEGE MAJOR AND CAREER DIRECTION

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. You've Got the Power**
- 3. Major Decisions**
- 4. The College Major and Career Connection**
- 5. Major Myths and Tips**
- 6. Rate the College Career Center**



1 – INTRODUCTION

My expectation is that you purchased this DVD program because your student is experiencing some degree of uncertainty about choice of a college major and/or career direction. My goal in the introduction is to help your student understand that it is **very** normal for students to be uncertain about these choices. I'm also, through the gypsy skit, stressing that there is no such thing as a 'career test' that will give students the 'magic' answer. My intention is to empower student viewers with the recognition that they can trust their own judgment as they make their way through this exploration process. The introduction ends with an overview of the results that students can anticipate as they complete the program:

AS A RESULT OF GOING THROUGH THIS PROGRAM...

... you will be able to identify your interests, questions, and needs related to choice of a college major and career direction.

... you will learn about the College Major and Career Decision Making Process.

...you will get information and tools to support you in taking action towards a direction of your own choosing.

How you can support your student

You can reinforce the fact that uncertainty is normal and that being open to possibilities at this time has many benefits. Your student is venturing into new and unfamiliar areas and this form of risk taking can be both exciting and anxiety provoking. Be sensitive to your student's tendencies to perhaps both want and not want your support. At this point in their lives, teenagers are developing a self concept to define for themselves "Who am I?" as individuals separate from parents and other family members. During this developmental transition, teens may, as a result, experience genuine parental concern as pressure. Take care to not over react if your child accuses you of meddling. Another way to look at this time is that your child may be struggling with his or her own push/pull between wanting to be taken care of and wanting to make his/her own way in the world. You can play a key role is helping your student gain confidence as s/he moves forward.