



JOURNEYING WITH OUR CHILDREN, SUPPORTING THEIR ASPIRATIONS



Education & Career Guidance
Tips for Parents



What is Education and Career Guidance (ECG)?



ECG helps our children develop a sense of purpose in life. By nurturing self-awareness and self-directedness for lifelong learning, ECG helps our children develop a growth mindset, adaptability and a resilient attitude to embrace future opportunities and appreciate the value of all occupations.

How to use this handbook?

As a parent, you are one of the key decision influencers in your children's education and career aspirations. This handbook is written especially for you to help you understand how you can engage your children in conversations and activities to support them in their education and career decisions. Read on for more tips!

Your Role in ECG

What are some ways through which you can support your children as they discover and pursue their education and career aspirations?

Take some time to think about your personal beliefs and thoughts on how to support your children. You may find it helpful to record some of these reflections in the table provided below.

	Yes, I support my children by...	Not really, but I hope/try to...
I see myself as a facilitator and supporter of my children's decisions. <i>For example, I have conversations with my children about their interests, aspirations and the decisions they make or I accompany my children to open houses.</i>		
I recognise that my children are unique with their own strengths and interests, which means success looks different for every child. <i>For example, I encourage them to explore areas they are interested in.</i>		
I believe that my children's abilities can grow through dedication and hard work. <i>For example, I affirm my children for their efforts at staying focused and improving.</i>		
I believe that all job roles have value to society. <i>For example, I have conversations with my children about the different ways we can contribute to society.</i>		

Where do you go from here?

Now that you have thought about your own beliefs, it is time to get to know your children better too. This means having conversations with them about their strengths and interests, their education and career aspirations, as well as exploring opportunities to achieve them.

Not sure how to start? Here's a checklist of topics:

What I Know About My Children

Tick all that apply.

I know my children's...

- ☐ Interests
- ☐ Strengths
- ☐ Aspirations
- ☐ Long-term goals for their studies and life

Now that you have gone over this checklist, it is timely to start a conversation with your children. Here are some tips you can use when conversing with your children.

- ▶ **Stay open to the possible education and career pathways that are available and be flexible in discussing them with your children.**
- ▶ **Offer advice but avoid pressuring your children based on your own expectations and experiences.**

Read on for more tips!

3 Tips to Support Your Children's Education and Career Journey



Step 1:
Discovering
Purpose

1 Discovering Purpose

Guide your children to make informed decisions and take ownership of their choices

Pay attention to the strengths and interests your children display in various activities and interactions, and affirm them to build their confidence. Discuss important considerations with your children when they are making education and career decisions. Empower them to take ownership of their goals and contribute meaningfully at home, in school and in the community.



Where Do I
Want To Go?
Exploring
Opportunities

2 Exploring Opportunities

Encourage your children to find out more about education pathways and the World of Work



Encourage and support your children in exploring different education and career pathways aligned to their strengths and interests.

Help your children see that they can broaden their education and career possibilities and encourage them to be confident of the future as they pursue their goals and aspirations.

How Do I Get There?
Staying
Relevant

3 Staying Relevant



Embrace lifelong learning and develop your children's future-ready skills

Learning does not occur only in school, but throughout life. Journey with your children through triumphs and challenges in their education and career journey. Celebrate their efforts and resilience, and encourage them to reframe setbacks as learning opportunities.

Help them practise adaptability when facing changes. Encourage them to keep their minds open to new options and think of alternative plans, instead of being fixated on one option.

Help your children see that they can grow and improve with effort and perseverance, and that they can build on opportunities to develop themselves. As the World of Work is rapidly changing with technological disruptions and new job roles being created, your children will need to be lifelong learners as they move towards leading a purposeful life.



1 Discovering Purpose

Guide your children to make informed decisions and take ownership of their choices

Understanding their Strengths and Interests



Conversation Starters

Set aside time and space to have conversations with your children. Listen to and understand your children's thoughts and feelings. Use the following questions to encourage your children to find out more about themselves.

For your children in Primary School:

- ▶ What are three positive words that describe you?
- ▶ What types of activities do you enjoy doing both in and out of school?
- ▶ What are your goals and aspirations?



For your children in Secondary School:

- ▶ What are your favourite subjects and Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs)? What do you like about them?
- ▶ How would you want to contribute to our community to make a positive difference?
- ▶ What are your goals and aspirations?



For your children in Post-Secondary Education Institutions:

- ▶ Which industries and occupations are you curious about?
- ▶ What is important to you in your future career?
- ▶ How do you plan to go about achieving your aspirations?



Suggested Activities

Try the following activities to observe your children's strengths and interests in action. Do remember to affirm your children for their positive efforts.

Managing one's education and career journey is not a one-time decision but a series of decisions made over one's lifetime. Encourage your children to develop qualities such as self-awareness, self-directedness, a passion for lifelong learning, adaptability, and resilience, which are essential for them to be future-ready.

For your children in Primary School:

- ▶ Explore the Career Quest feature on the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Primary)¹ together with your children and discover their career interests and values.
- ▶ Encourage your children to develop a variety of interests and skills and cheer them on in these efforts, e.g. through their co-curricular activities (CCAs), Values in Action (VIA) and school programmes.
- ▶ Assist your children in activities that will help express their education and career aspirations, e.g. drawing a picture, writing a composition, making a poster or doing a presentation.



For your children in Secondary School:

- ▶ Encourage your children to explore the profiling tools on the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Secondary). Chat with your children about what they have discovered regarding their skills confidence, learning styles, work values and career interests.
- ▶ Encourage your children to speak with their teachers or ECG Counsellor, alumni and industry professionals regarding information and opportunities in the education and career pathways that they may be interested in. Check in with your children on these conversations.
- ▶ Encourage your children to engage in activities, such as CCAs or Values in Action (VIA), to discover their interests, skills and strengths, and their education and career aspirations.



¹All students have a personal account from Primary 5 onwards.

For your children in Post-Secondary Education Institutions:

- ▶ Encourage your children to explore their strengths and interests and the larger industry landscape in a deeper manner through the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Pre-University) or the MySkillsFuture Workforce Portal if your children are currently in a Pre-University or post-secondary education institution respectively. Have discussions about what your children have learnt.
- ▶ Have discussions with your children about the education and career pathways they may be interested in and encourage them to have conversations with teachers, lecturers, ECG Counsellors, alumni, and industry professionals regarding information and opportunities available in these pathways.



Resources

Discover what Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) means for your children's development and why it matters.



Watch this video for practical tips on how you can support your children's social and emotional growth at home.

<https://go.gov.sg/selresforparents>

Help Your Child Flourish



Visit this link to find out more about building your children's social-emotional competencies.

<https://go.gov.sg/selresforparents>

Explore this **Toolbox for Parents**, which offers practical strategies and conversation starters to support your children's socio-emotional development and resilience.

<http://go.gov.sg/pfw-toolbox-for-parents>



Key modules include:

- Setting Goals with Your Child to foster purpose and direction
- Celebrating Your Child's Efforts and Successes to build confidence
- Giving Your Child S.P.A.C.E. to Build Resilience to strengthen coping skills



2 Exploring Opportunities

Encourage your children to find out more about education pathways and the World of Work

Exploring Education and Career Pathways with them



Conversation Starters

Start a conversation on exploring the various education and career pathways with your children.

For your children in Primary School:

- ▶ Which secondary schools are you curious to find out more about and why?
- ▶ What are some job roles that you find interesting and hope to find out more about? What excites you about these jobs?



For your children in Secondary School:

- ▶ Which post-secondary education institutions are you curious to find out more about and why? What subjects or programmes do they offer that interest you?
- ▶ How do you think you can find out more about the education or career pathways you are interested in, and how might the subjects you take help you explore or prepare for these areas?



For your children in Post-Secondary Education Institutions:

- ▶ Which education institutions are you curious to find out more about? How will they help you achieve your aspirations?
- ▶ What research have you done to find out more about the education or career pathways you are interested in?





Further Tips

Do you prefer working with people, ideas, data or things?² What about your children? Use this list to help your children discover their interests and skills, and discuss possible careers related to these interests and skills. You can also use it to explore opportunities in which these interests and skills can be further developed in your children.



People

- Talking to and discovering more about people around them
- Taking charge of and leading a group
- Helping or teaching others



Ideas

- Coming up with various ideas for a situation or problem
- Having an active imagination
- Enjoy asking 'what if' questions



Data

- Working with numbers
- Organising information
- Researching and discovering more about a subject or an area of interest



Things

- Operating machines or tools
- Tinkering with models or items
- Modelling things and building prototypes of their solutions to problems

²Prediger, D.J. (1982). Dimensions underlying Holland's hexagon: Missing link between interests and occupations? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 21, 259-287.

Suggested Activities

Here are some activities for your children to learn more about the various education and career pathways. Be involved in the activities where possible as these will help to create shared and meaningful experiences between you and your children.

For your children in Primary School:

- ▶ Explore the secondary schools available for your children by going to schools' open houses together. Do research on schools together with your children using the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Primary) or SchoolFinder.
- ▶ Read books with your children about the jobs that different people do and discuss these jobs with them.
- ▶ Explore the different jobs around you and your children using the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Primary) and explain how all jobs are valuable in contributing to Singapore. Encourage your children to talk about the jobs that interest them.



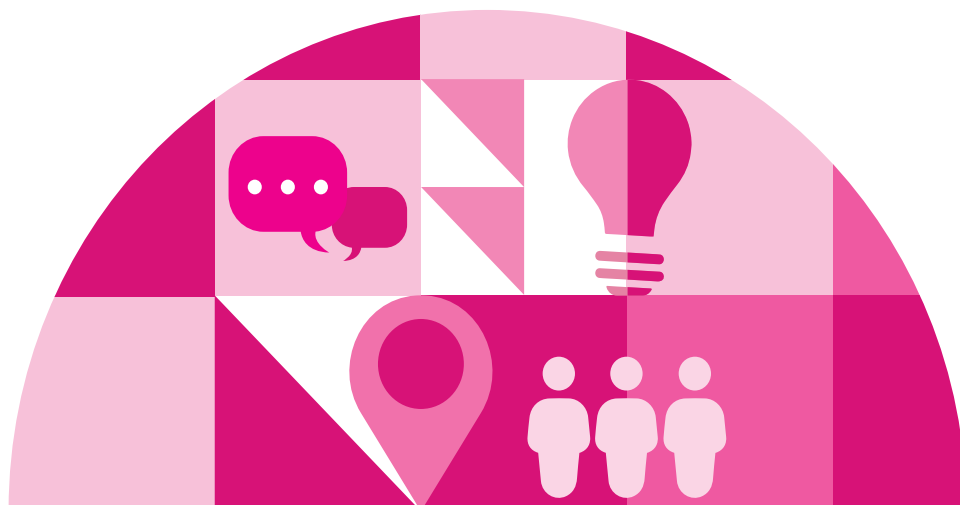
For your children in Secondary School:

- ▶ Explore post-secondary education institutions together with your children using the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Secondary) or MOE Post-Secondary page.
- ▶ Encourage your children to pursue hobbies/projects (e.g. CCAs, VIA, competitions and courses) that allow them to further develop their interests and skills. These can also be recorded in their education portfolio.
- ▶ Support your children's participation in VIA, learning journeys and education and career fairs to expose them to different education and career pathways.



For your children in Post-Secondary Education Institutions:

- ▶ Discuss how your children are developing and refining their strengths and interests through the exciting array of school activities available.
- ▶ Encourage your children to participate in meaningful engagements with different communities to hone their skills and build a portfolio on leadership, project management, community collaboration, and other Critical Core Skills (p.18).
- ▶ Encourage your children to participate in a wide range of experiences, e.g. career workshops, fairs, learning journeys to industries, internships or work experience programmes and ECG counselling offered by schools/ career centres in polytechnics and Institute of Technical Education (ITE) colleges. They can also speak with their teachers or assigned mentor (in polytechnics/ITE).





Resources

Visit these links to find out more!

Resources for parents to stay updated on **developments in education**:

- ❑ MOE Facebook (www.facebook.com/moesingapore)
- ❑ Schoolbag (www.schoolbag.edu.sg)
- ❑ Parenting with MOE Instagram (<https://go.gov.sg/parentingwithmoesg>)
- ❑ Parent Kit (<https://go.gov.sg/parentkit>)
- ❑ @explore.ecg (<https://go.gov.sg/ecg-instagram>)

Resource for parents to support your children to be **future-ready**:

- ❑ MySkillsFuture Portal (for adults; polytechnic, ITE and tertiary students) (<https://go.gov.sg/changesinworkforce>)
- ❑ MOE YouTube Playlist: A World Beyond School (<https://go.gov.sg/awbs-videos>)



3 Staying Relevant

**Embrace lifelong learning
and develop your children's
future-ready skills**

**Encouraging them to continuously pursue opportunities
for learning**



Conversation Starters

Kickstart a meaningful conversation with your children on embracing lifelong learning.

For your children in Primary School:

- ▶ What do you think a day in the life of a/an _____ (job role) would be like? What kind of training do you think this person would have gone through to do the job well?
- ▶ Tell me about a time when you tried to do something you found difficult, or a time when you felt discouraged. What was that like? How did you get through that challenge? What do you think you can do differently the next time?
- ▶ How do you tell when you are doing your best work? When you are not doing your best, what can you change so that you can do better?



For your children in Secondary School:

- ▶ What are the setbacks/failures you have faced that taught you something? Can I share about a setback I experienced that helped me grow?
- ▶ What did you try that was difficult for you this week? What will you do to challenge yourself this month? *(You can make this a family challenge and get your children to ask you these questions too.)*
- ▶ As you consider your aspirations, which post-secondary pathways have you explored? How can we find out more? *(Refer to the Useful Links and Resources section on p.24 for more information on post-secondary pathways.)*



For your children in Post-Secondary Education Institutions:

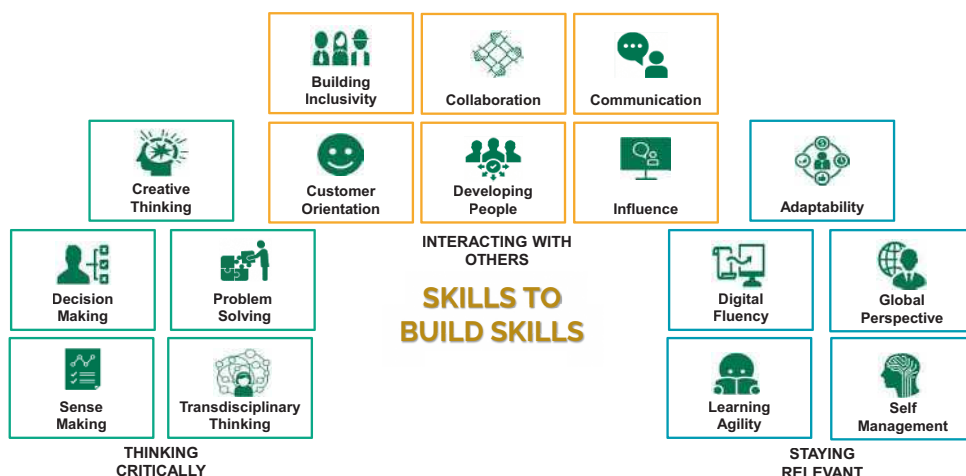
- ▶ What are the opportunities for continual learning and growth in the education and career pathways you are interested in?
- ▶ Industries and careers are constantly evolving. How can you prepare yourself to enter the World of Work?
- ▶ What are some skills and competencies which would prepare you for the ever-changing future?



Critical Core Skills for the World of Work

To respond to changing industry trends, technology adoption and new business models, your children will need to acquire relevant skills in new and emerging areas. These are known as Critical Core Skills³, as illustrated below. Share these skills with your children and get them to explore opportunities to develop them.

Critical Core Skills (CCS) That Employers Want



Find out more about Critical Core Skills



SKILLSfuture SG

³ Retrieved from https://www.myskillsfuture.gov.sg/content/portal/en/career-resources/career-resources/education-career-personal-development/2022_Critical_Core_Skills.html

Suggested Activities

Reflecting on meaningful experiences, such as transitions, setbacks and achievements, is something you can do together with your children. Encourage your children to document experiences, skills and accomplishments regularly, as this will help your children chart their own process of lifelong learning and personal growth.

For your children in Primary School:

- ▶ Talk to your children about your own industry and career, and the skills and lessons you have picked up through your work.
- ▶ Seize moments where you can discuss the different jobs and skills required in the places you and your children visit, by asking: “Think about a day in the life of a/an _____ (job role). What might be something difficult that people with this job have to do? What do you think they can do to get better at what they do?”
- ▶ Identify ways in which your children can cope with change and transitions. Share your personal experiences on how you have managed such moments.



For your children in Secondary School:

- ▶ Share your lifelong learning journey with your children, encouraging them to set and review self-developmental goals, and document their learning experiences and reflection.
- ▶ Stay updated on ECG events. Encourage them to connect and learn from industry professionals at career fairs and other events.
- ▶ Encourage your children to find out more about the school programmes and resources available that will allow them to develop skills and learn continually.



For your children in Post-Secondary Education Institutions:

- ▶ Guide your children through periodic reviews of their education and career plans, and in making appropriate revisions and adjustments along the way.
- ▶ Share your personal experiences where mistakes and failures became opportunities to build your resilience and personal growth. Advise your children how they can tap on setbacks as opportunities for further growth.
- ▶ Assist your children in identifying activities and projects that will help develop future-ready skills.



Resources

Visit these links to find out more!

For your children in Primary School:

Information on the **different education pathways** available on the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Primary):

- <https://go.gov.sg/educationlandscape-pri>

Resources on nurturing your children's **social and emotional competencies**:

- <https://go.gov.sg/selresforparents>

For your children in Secondary School:

Information on the **different education pathways** available on the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Secondary):

- <https://go.gov.sg/educationlandscape-sec>

Information on **different job roles** and the **Singapore Industry Landscape** on the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Secondary):

- <https://go.gov.sg/industrylandscape-sec>

For your children in Post-Secondary Education Institutions:

Information on the **different education pathways** available on the MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Pre-University):

- (<https://go.gov.sg/educationlandscape-preu>)

Information on **different job roles** and the **Singapore Industry Landscape**:

- MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Pre-University):
(<https://go.gov.sg/industrylandscape-preu>)
- MOE YouTube Playlist: A World Beyond School:
(<https://go.gov.sg/awbs-videos>)

Information on **SkillsFuture Work-Study Programmes**:

- <https://go.gov.sg/workstudyprogramme>

Resources for **Lifelong Learning**:

- SkillsFuture Singapore
(<https://go.gov.sg/programmesforyou>)
- SkillsFuture Series
(<https://go.gov.sg/sfsgseries>)

From One Parent to Another

Guiding your children on the journey to achieving their aspirations may not be easy, but you are not alone. Here are some parent-children stories on what this journey looks like for various individuals.

Stories for parents with children in:

Primary School

- ☐ [Career guidance at 7 – too soon or too late?](#)
- ☐ [Choosing a secondary school: 'What I did that paid off'](#)

Secondary School

- ☐ [Should I choose a subject I'm good at, or one that I love?](#)
- ☐ [Choosing subjects for Secondary 3: 'Put interest before popularity'](#)

Post-Secondary Education Institutions

- ☐ [Four things I tell my daughter to ensure she finds work in the future](#)
- ☐ [Why I encouraged my kids to take up part-time work](#)

You can find all these stories and more on Schoolbag.



Useful Links and Resources on ECG

Resources for parents with children in:

Primary School

MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Primary)	https://go.gov.sg/mysfpri	
Subjects for Secondary Schools	https://go.gov.sg/secsubjects	
Secondary 1 Posting Process	https://go.gov.sg/sec1posting	
What's Next (After PSLE)	https://go.gov.sg/whats-next-psle	
Tips on Coping with the Transition to Secondary School	 Parent Kit: https://go.gov.sg/pk-ready-secondary-go	 Resource: https://go.gov.sg/transitionsupportel

Secondary School

MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Secondary)	https://go.gov.sg/mysfsec	
What's Next (After N-Level)	https://go.gov.sg/whats-next-nlevel	
What's Next (After O-Level)	https://go.gov.sg/whats-next-olevel	
Post-Secondary Education	https://go.gov.sg/postsecondary	
Tips on Coping with Transition through Upper Secondary/ Post-Secondary Education	https://go.gov.sg/transitionsupportel	
Supporting Our Teens in Choosing Post-Secondary Pathways	https://go.gov.sg/pk-postsec-pathways	

Post-Secondary Education Institutions

MySkillsFuture Student Portal (Pre-University)	https://go.gov.sg/mysfpreu	
What's Next (After A-Level)	https://go.gov.sg/whats-next-alevel	
Overview of Post- Secondary Education Institutions (Including autonomous universities, arts institutions, government-affiliated education institutions and polytechnics)	https://go.gov.sg/overview-pseis	



Ministry of Education
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