



# Get Ready for What's Next

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**HELP YOUR CHILDREN DISCOVER WHAT THEY LOVE**

WEAC member Art Preuss counsels students about their futures at Indian Trail Academy in Kenosha.

**In 6 industry sectors, 75-90% of future jobs will require post-secondary education, which can be a 4-year college, vocational school or trade school. Your child will have many options to consider, including:**

- Information Services
- Private Education Services
- Government/Public Education Services
- Professional and Business Services
- Financial Services
- Healthcare

Between 2008 and 2018, employment is expected to increase by 15.3 million jobs, according to federal Bureau of Labor Statistics projections. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce shows that 63 percent of all jobs will require at least some post-secondary education. The good news? The jobs will be there when your child is ready to launch.

The report also shows that 23 percent of all occupations will require a bachelor's degree by 2018, compared with just 9 percent in 1973. That means that there will be a great need for a variety of skill sets. Vocational education and other trade-specific education options are gaining in popularity among students of all ages. Millions of students are choosing skill-specific education so they can join the work force faster and do something they truly enjoy.

Art Preuss, a school counselor at Indian Trail Academy in Kenosha, says the key to helping your child discover life after high school is to find something the student enjoys. "It shouldn't be about prestige or making a lot of money," says Preuss. "It should be about helping them find something they love. It's their life. Let them live it."

So how do you know which kind of education is best for your child? Preuss says to start conversations with your child in elementary school. "It's never too early to start talking about what they want to do after high school," he says. "Expose them to many different kinds of careers and help them understand that what they do now can make a big difference in their future plans."

By your child's junior year, it's time to sit down and start writing. Ask your teenager to list their career goals, as well as their accomplishments – even if they haven't decided what they want to do next. "What do they love to do?" asks Preuss. "After all, they'll be doing it for 40 to 50 hours a week for the next 40 to 50 years. It better be something they enjoy."

Ask your teenager to write down a list of:

- Academic and personal strengths
- Extracurricular activities
- Awards
- Grade point average (GPA)
- Class rank
- SAT, ACT, or AP scores

Next, ask them to think about and list the qualities they're looking for in a college or vocational school. Do they prefer to:

- Go away to school
- Stay close to home
- Take online courses

Once you have the preliminary information, begin your research. School counselors are a great place to start. They have many tools, catalogs and information about the types of post-secondary education. There are also guidebooks and resources on the Internet to help you identify options that are best for your child. Most experts recommend narrowing choices to about six to ten schools. Then, ask your teen to fill out the applications, complete the essays and obtain the necessary recommendation letters.