

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING





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INTRODUCTION TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

As a parent, your goal is to provide the best opportunities for your child in order for them to grow and ensure future success. This guide aims to navigate you into helping your child make the best decisions for their education and career, and answering your questions about experiential learning.

SO, WHAT IS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

Experiential learning provides your child with hands on learning opportunities that help them gain the right set of **skills**, **knowledge**, and **experiences** to prepare for the future workforce.

TYPES OF OPPORTUNITIES

K- GRADE 12

- Extra-curricular activities
- Volunteering
- Field Trips
- Career fairs
- In-Class Experiments
- Take your child to work
- Guest Speakers

POST-SECONDARY

- Cooperative Education
- Apprenticeship
- Internship
- Field Placements
- Job Shadowing
- Study Abroad
- Research Opportunities

*While all these opportunities are interchangeable, and most opportunities you can go into at any age, the organized list shares what is most common among students of that grade range to participate in.



HOW CAN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING BENEFIT YOUR CHILD?

There are numerous benefits that experiential learning can bring to your child, but here are just a few:

- Allows your child to **develop valuable skills** for future employment, such as problem solving skills, creativity, and communication.
- Opportunity for **meeting new people**, networking, and creating workplace contacts.
- Gain realistic knowledge and **understanding of the workplace**.
- Clearer understanding of **career and academic direction**.
- Gives your child the opportunity to **explore their strengths and interests**, which helps them when learning about career options.
- Test and **expand the skills they learn in the classroom**, applying theory to the real world.
- Better **future employment opportunities**; studies show students with experience will have higher starting salaries out of school
- Gives students a **greater interest and focus in their education** and understanding in what they are studying.

Don't just take it from us! Here's what student's have to say:

"Just completed my first co-op, now going into my second! It has allowed to learn more about my field and give me a clearer idea of what I would like to pursue as a career. It also gives me the chance to build my resume and network with many people and companies."

- Nikita, 3rd year University student,
Honours Biochemistry co-op

"Experiential Learning allowed me to use what I had learned through textbooks and classroom lectures, and learn additional new skills and techniques that one can only learn first hand."

- Marium, College Graduate, Pharmacy
Field Placement



A PARENT'S ROLE & EARLY LEARNING

Parents play a huge role in their child's education and career decision making. **Among the top three influencers for students, parents are number one¹**. With this in mind, it is important to begin practicing experiential learning in your own home, and finding the best opportunities for your child.

Importance of play and experiential learning

According to Melbourne Child Psychology²

- Allows children to learn their own areas of interest, and work through problems
- Enables children to act out different scenarios, through which they can learn assertiveness, social skills, leadership qualities, and how to solve group conflict through role play
- Learning is not just about academic pursuits, but also about life skills
- Common complaint from students is that they don't see why they're being asked to study, if they won't be applying it to the real world
- Important for children to experience trial and error, and how they can overcome such challenges
- Problems they face will allow children to work out their own unique strategies, rather than following formulas to derive an answer
- Incorporate hands on activities during family time such as building with Lego, baking, arts and crafts, playing with electronics, and more.

¹Melbourne Child Psychology & School Psychology Services. "Melbourne Child Psychology & School Psychology Services, Port Melbourne." Melbourne Child Psychology & School Psychology Services. Accessed July 23, 2018. <https://www.melbournechildpsychology.com.au/blog/play-experiential-learning-early-childhood/>.

²Hnatchuk, Darlene. Career Planning: A Guide For Parents. PDF. McGill University, August, 2017. https://www.mcgill.ca/caps/files/caps/workshop_parents.pdf



WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential Learning is not just a way of learning in schools- **it can be practiced in your child's everyday life.** We recommend the following few steps in order for you to actively support and encourage experiential learning in their lives.

- 1 Create an experiential learning environment **as early as possible.**
- 2 **Understand your child's strengths and interests**, and find them opportunities that match those, encouraging them to **get involved in their school or community** through extra curriculars, clubs, summer camps, volunteering, etc.
- 3 **Reinforce positive workplace habits** and ethics.
- 4 Talk about **your own experiences and career skills**, or refer your students to friends, family, or colleagues, with experience related to your child's career interests.
- 5 **Explore different career options together** by researching jobs and companies, and see what skills that they may need to grow.
- 6 Encourage them to search careers and future education opportunities **with their educators.**
- 7 Incorporate **hands on activities** through play.
- 8 Help your child **reflect on their ideas and goals**, and express feedback on skills and abilities that you observe.
- 9 Support your child during the **job or opportunity search process.**
- 10 **Listen to their ideas and concerns**, but resist the temptation to take responsibility for their process. Experiential learning is all about taking control of an experience, and learning from it.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

We recommended encouraging your child to visit the resources below to get started on their experiential learning journey:

EXPLORE FUTURE CAREERS

- Quizzes that explore different occupations for you and your personality, produced by the Canadian Job Bank.
- Quiz that determines your top skills and abilities, and best occupations matching those, produced by the Ontario Government.
- Search different jobs and careers in Ontario.

EXPLORE POST-SECONDARY PROGRAMS

- DataTable consisting of all University or College programs with an Experiential Learning Component.
- Guide to Ontario Universities
- Guide to Ontario Colleges

FIND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN...

- Peel Region (Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon)
- Peel, Health Services
- Mississauga
- Brampton
- Caledon and Caledon Community Services
- Halton Region and for High School students
- Burlington
- Milton
- Oakville

PREPARING A RESUME & COVER LETTER

- Resume Builder by the Canadian Job Bank
 - For Students
 - Design a unique resume
 - Resume and Cover Letter
- Templates by Microsoft Office

STUDENT JOB BOARDS

- Job Postings
- Talent Egg

GENERAL JOB BOARDS

- Linkedin
- Indeed
- Monster



For more information and resources, visit the [**ELPH**](#) site.
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