

**A PARENT'S GUIDE TO**

# **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

Helping your child navigate the world of careers is an important task - especially with our ever-changing workforce. You may be wondering: What can I do to help my child make decisions for their life after high school and beyond?

We've put together this guide to help you answer that question by understanding some of the options that are available to your child as they look to explore career possibilities!

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YOUR LOCAL EMPLOYMENT PLANNING COUNCIL

 **Ontario**  
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# HOW CAN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES BENEFIT YOUR CHILD?

- Students can identify and explore their strengths, interests, and skill sets - all important information for learning about future career options.
- Organizations are looking for people who know how to communicate well and work on a team - skills that can be developed through experiential learning.
- Their experience may give them an opportunity to work on problem solving in the workplace setting.
- Students who spend time in the workplace may be further engaged and interested in their classroom performance.
- You may find an increased confidence in female and minority students when it's time to make schooling and career decisions.<sup>2</sup>
- Your child may have the potential to be hired after completing a placement in the workplace.
- You may find your child has a higher starting salary for their first job after graduation.<sup>3</sup>
- Experiential learning opportunities may lead to a smoother transition when entering the workforce.
- Employers now see volunteering as valid workplace experience.<sup>4</sup>
- These experiences help your child stand out by equipping them with examples to use during a job interview and content to include on a resume.
- It's the perfect opportunity for your child to learn about different jobs and industries to make smart career decisions.
- Many employers are looking beyond academic achievements for candidates who have a variety of experiences where they have demonstrated their skill sets.
- The majority of students who take part in work placements during post-secondary education receive job offers after graduation.<sup>5</sup>



## EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES



63% of people who took an experiential learning placement during their postsecondary education found employment after graduation.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Mahmoud Haddara and Heather Skanes, "A reflection on cooperative education: from experience to experiential learning," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education* 8, no. 1 (2007): 67-76

<sup>3</sup>Mahmoud Haddara and Heather Skanes, "A reflection on cooperative education: from experience to experiential learning," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 8, no. 1, 2007: 67-76

<sup>4</sup>Nancy Collamer, "Proof that Volunteering Pays Off for Job Hunters," *Forbes*, June 2013. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/06/24/proof-that-volunteering-pays-off-for-job-hunters/#1fbae551753a>

<sup>5</sup>Carley Casebeer, Sondra Eger, and Rosanne Waters, "Student (Un)Employment in Canada," Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (2017)

<sup>6</sup>Carley Casebeer, Sondra Eger, and Rosanne Waters, "Student (Un)Employment in Canada," Canadian Alliance of student Associations (2017)

# TO START, YOU MAY BE WONDERING: WHAT IS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

(pronunciation: ik-speer-ee-en-shuh | lur-ning)

IT MAY BE HARD TO SAY, BUT IT CAN BE EASY TO DO.

Experiential learning opportunities are hands-on learning experiences that help students prepare for future employment. Examples of experiential learning could include a co-op placement, an internship, an apprenticeship, an extra-curricular activity, a volunteer experience, an employer presenting to a class, a field trip, or a job shadowing experience. Participating in these experiences allows students to learn more about a future career and learn new skills. All local students have the opportunity to participate in experiential learning.

## STUDENT SUCCESS

“If you [do a hands-on activity in] high school it can get you a better chance at a good job.”

- **Jacob,**

Grade 9, reflecting on welding camp

## STUDENT SUCCESS

“When I was in the tenth grade, I had applied for the OYAP placement and my amazing career took off from there.”

- **Jillianne,**

2<sup>nd</sup> year General Machinist Apprentice

## STUDENT SUCCESS

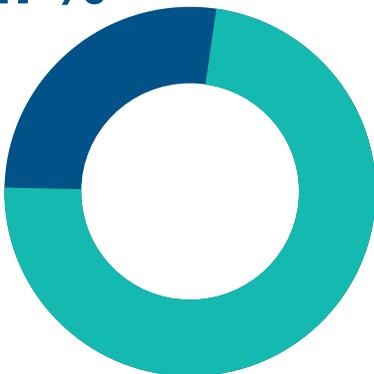
“I am gaining new skills every day. I believe this experience will be very valuable for me in the future, whether I am looking for employment or am fully employed at the time.”

- **Corey,**

University of Windsor student reflecting on his internship

## VOLUNTEERING WORKS

27%



Those who have done volunteer work have a **27%** higher chance of getting hired compared to those who haven't volunteered.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Nancy Collamer, “Proof that Volunteering Pays Off for Job Hunters,” Forbes, June 2013. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/06/24/proof-that-volunteering-pays-off-for-job-hunters/#1fbae551753a>

# AS A PARENT OR GUARDIAN HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT HOME?

## WE SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING

- 1 Talk about your own work experiences. What career path did you take? What skills do you have?
- 2 Encourage your child to take part in extracurricular activities, educational programs, and summer camps that connect with their job interests, such as a computer camp, robotics team, public speaking contest or environment club.
- 3 Explore non-traditional careers together by researching jobs and companies online, and by asking your friends and family members to share their career experiences.
- 4 Suggest your child volunteers in areas they are hoping to work in. Does your child like animals? Then see if the Humane Society is looking for volunteers. Is your child interested in construction and building things? Explore with your child how they can get involved in helping organizations such as Habitat for Humanity.
- 5 Incorporate hands-on activities during family time, such as building with Legos, drawing, baking, making crafts, designing and building something like a skateboard ramp, or playing with old electronics to see how they work.
- 6 Support your child's career interests by encouraging them to explore career opportunities with their educators.
- 7 Have career conversations at home.  
*Try out these conversation starters:*
  - o What was the most exciting part of your day?
  - o What did you find most interesting about \_\_\_\_\_ class?
  - o What is happening in the world that interests you?
  - o What world problem would you like to solve?
  - o What would you like to be known for?

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

 AT SCHOOL	 AT HOME
CLUBS / TEAMS	MAKE DINNER TOGETHER
FIELD TRIPS	DRAW OR BUILD WITH BLOCKS
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	HAVE A LEMONADE STAND
TAKE YOUR KID TO WORK DAY	BUILD A TREE HOUSE
JOB SHADOW	VISIT MUSEUMS
CO-OP	GO CAMPING
INTERNSHIP	WATCH DOCUMENTARIES
APPRENTICESHIP	VOLUNTEER

# DON'T JUST TAKE IT FROM US! HERE'S WHAT LOCAL STUDENTS ARE SHARING ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES:

"It taught me what I like and don't like when looking for a career. Also which direction I should take."

- **Mark,**

General Machinist Apprentice at St. Clair College

"Networking is essential to find a job but also excelling within a job. It provides valuable experience before entering the labour force. Also, it offers a break from the classroom."

- **Sebastian,**

University of Windsor student reflecting on his internship

"I felt like I was contributing to the team's and firm's overall success in my role...I was able to build the skills I needed to better apply myself in the classroom and my performance at my placement led to the firm offering me a full time position a few months before I had graduated from university."

- **Shelja,**

Accountant

"The hands on training that I received has changed my entire life, I now have a career that I can look forward to enjoying in the future and it also helps me to be financially stable."

- **Natasha,**

General Machinist Apprentice

"If I hadn't [participated in experiential learning] I would have never realized that my own interests are now connected to the environment."

- **Amelia,**

Grade 12 student in the Specialist High Skills Major Environment program

## ARE YOU READY TO GET STARTED?

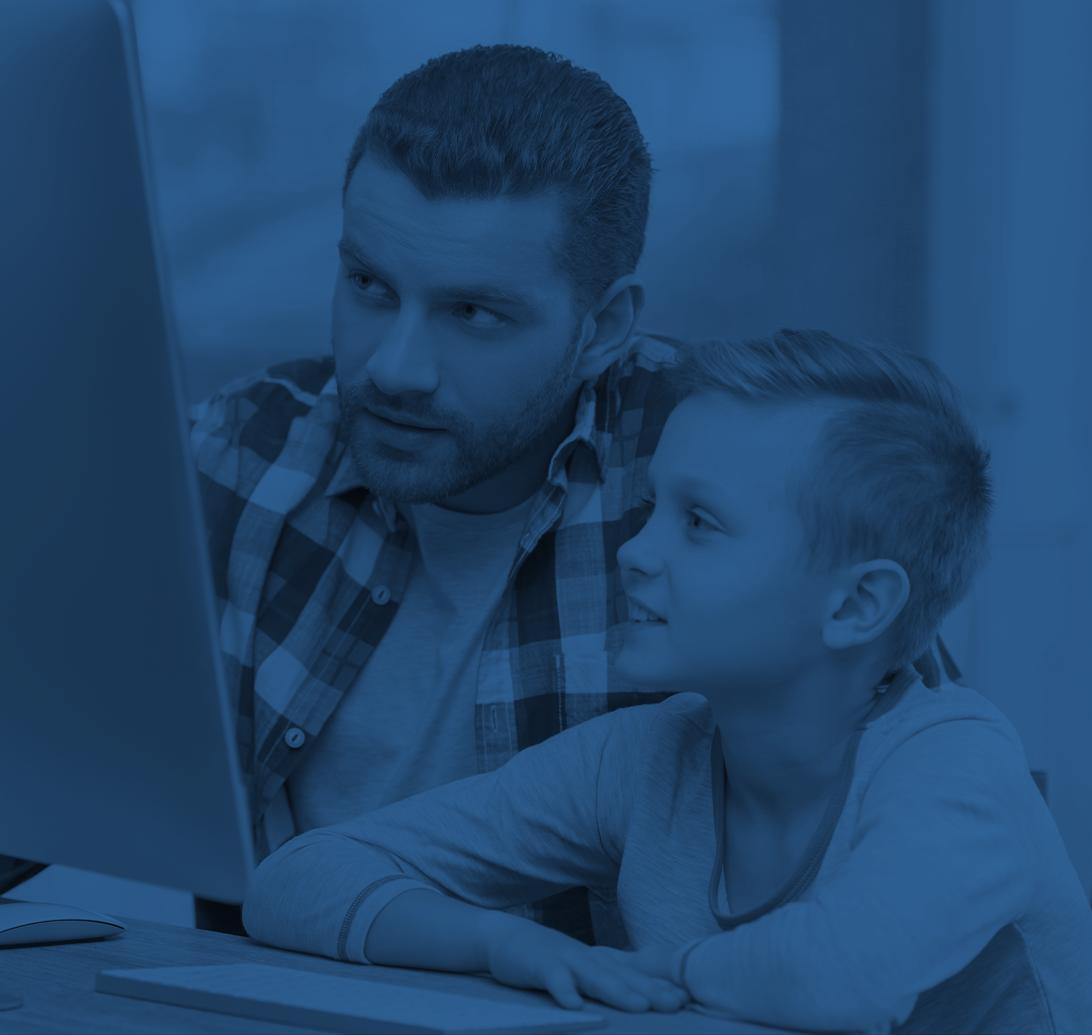
Help your child connect with and learn more about the opportunities that are available to them by visiting:

[workforcewindsorsex.com](http://workforcewindsorsex.com)

For more information on the local labour market and resources for your child to explore careers, check out:

[workforcewindsorsex.com/resources/wenav](http://workforcewindsorsex.com/resources/wenav)

For a list of available programs and school contacts, visit:  
[workforcewindsorsex.com](http://workforcewindsorsex.com) or call 226-674-3220



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Casebeer, Carley, Sondra Eger, and Rosanne Waters. "Student (Un)Employment in Canada." Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (2017).

Collamer, Nancy. "Proof that Volunteering Pays Off for Job Hunters." Forbes. June 2013. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/06/24/proof-that-volunteering-pays-off-for-job-hunters/#1fbae551753a>

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