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Help Your Teen Find a Summer Job

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According to Monster's [2007 High School Graduate Survey](#) of more than 2,000 high school graduates, some two-thirds of today's graduates already have work experience. If you want to help your teenager become one of them this summer, the best way to do it is to solemnly pledge that you'll only help, because it's much too easy to succumb to the temptation to find a job for him.

"My only caution, as a 16-year career coach and resume writer, is that the parents must get their child invested in the process somehow," says Laura DeCarlo, president of Career Directors International, a career information and job seeker support organization. "A teen who doesn't want

to work or who takes for granted that Mom and Dad are footing the bill either way is not typically that motivated and, regardless of what the parents do, will not be successful."

Your teen has to do the real work of finding a summer job, such as contacting organizations with openings, filling out applications and interviewing. Your job is to provide support as a combination encourager/coach.

Within that role, there's still plenty you can do to boost your child's chances of landing a summer job. Here are some ideas:

Introduce Your Teen to Your Contacts -- Then Get Out of the Way

You might have friends or professional colleagues who work for organizations that have summer job openings. Offer to put your teen in touch with these people, and then "turn it over to your child to start the conversations on their own," says entry-level employment expert Terese Corey Blanck, coauthor of *The College to Career Road Map: A Four-Year Guide to Coaching Your Student*.

Point Out Key Job Search Resources

Your teen is probably familiar with major job search Web sites, like Monster, and perhaps even your local newspaper's employment classifieds. But be sure he is also aware of other key job-hunting resources, especially locally, such as a nearby government-sponsored workforce center or the nearby college's [career center](#).

Also, make sure your teen isn't overlooking or ignoring one of the more obvious summer job search tactics: Stopping by businesses and organizations of interest and asking if they have any openings.

Help Your Child Pinpoint Key Strengths and Interests

You've been watching and listening to your teenager for a long time. You've been able to observe what he is best at when it comes to skills and abilities, and you've also had the chance to see various [passions](#) blossom.

So tell your teenager what you see as his key [strengths](#) and top interests. Your observations might point to an obvious summer job path.

"If your teenager knows what she's looking for, then she just might find it -- and she'll be able to articulate that to the employer who is looking to hire a decent teen," says Corey Blanck.

Encourage Professionalism

If your teenager is like many, he won't consider the importance of dressing and acting appropriately during the search for a summer job. But [being professional](#) is a simple way for your teen to stand out.

Case in point: "Many people make the mistake of arriving at retail stores dressed for the beach, or [they're] out holding hands with their boyfriend on a Saturday night while shopping and asking for a job application," says DeCarlo. Not too impressive, she stresses.

So encourage your teenager to dress nicely when picking up or turning in job applications. Urge him to create a basic resume, particularly since few of his peers will bother to do so, and to treat everyone he meets along the way with respect. "Those are the golden rules for a job applicant of any age," says DeCarlo.

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