

# Your Child is Job #1

**A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR PARENTS**



# About MEBA

Midlands Education and Business Alliance (MEBA) is a dynamic organization with an eye on the future. We work to build community connections and foster education and business partnerships to create pathways for students from school to work. Founded in 1990 as part of the statewide Tech Prep initiative, MEBA serves 9 school districts, 185 schools, more than 116,000 students and coordinates the activities of more than 250 business and education partners. To learn more or to see how MEBA can help you, please visit [www.mebasc.com](http://www.mebasc.com).





# You are your child's first teacher and greatest influence.

Research shows that a child's academic success and college and career planning are directly impacted by parental involvement. We know parents want the best for their children, even if they don't have all the answers. That's why Midlands Education and Business Alliance (MEBA) wants to help.

Our *Your Child Is Job #1* program works to provide parents and caregivers with the answers and encouragement they need. Through employer- and school-sponsored sessions offered at local worksites, resource guides and online tips, *Your Child Is Job #1* supports parents as they help their children make good education, career and life choices.

*MEBA's Your Child Is Job #1: A Resource Guide for Parents* covers a range of topics from early learning to career readiness including:

## ► TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Academic Success
- Involvement
- Transitioning from Elementary to Middle School

## ► COLLEGE AND

## CAREER READINESS

- CLUSTERS OF STUDY
- COLLEGE ACCESS
- CITIZENSHIP

# TIPS FOR PARENTS

From toddler to teen to young adult, you are your child's greatest role model. MEBA's *Your Child Is Job #1* program focuses on the whole child, with tips to provide positive academic support and important career guidance at every step along the way.

## GET SET: TIPS FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Good nutrition and regular physical activity help improve student academic achievement, behavior and emotional well-being.\*

- Provide your child with three well-balanced meals each day complete with plenty of good proteins, fruits and vegetables. Make sure he or she also drinks plenty of water.
- Make sure your child gets enough exercise, as regular physical activity can help improve a child's attitude, focus and academic achievement.
- Children thrive on routine. Having a set bedtime and wake time will help make sure your child is well rested and ready to learn.
- Have a special place in your home for your child to do his or her homework and study. Make sure the area is well lit and free from distractions. Keep supplies such as pencils, paper and a calculator handy.
- Teach children how to manage time wisely. Show them how to prioritize tasks, set goals and plan ahead.

## GET CONNECTED: TIPS FOR INVOLVEMENT

Family involvement has a greater impact on a child's academic performance than the qualities of the school itself.\*\*

- Attitudes are contagious, so make sure to have a positive one about education. Encourage and model respect and appreciation for learning, schools and educators.
- Talk with your child and outline your education expectations. Encourage him or her to set goals relating to grades, behavior, attitude and effort and work to achieve them.
- Attend school functions. Get to know the people at your child's school and establish positive relationships with your child's teacher, school administrators and other staff members.

- Look for opportunities to volunteer for school activities, events and committees.
- Stay informed of your child’s progress. Use email, phone calls, notes and scheduled visits to communicate with your child’s teacher.
- Emphasize the importance of being prepared. Use a calendar to keep track of upcoming school events, assignments and tests. Review homework assignments and return forms on time.

## **GET GROWING: TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING FROM ELEMENTARY TO MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Students transitioning from elementary to middle school often experience a decline in grades, motivation, self-esteem and self-confidence.

- Stay involved. Your child may want more space and personal freedom, but he or she still needs your guidance and craves your approval.
- Explain that middle school is different. It comes with increased homework and changing classes, but also with new and exciting opportunities.
- Help your child develop good study and time management skills. Being prepared and planning ahead will help your child not feel stressed or overwhelmed.
- Give your child opportunities to practice making good decisions at home. Let your child make decisions (and maybe even a few mistakes), then talk about the outcome to encourage wisdom and confidence.
- Middle school is a peak time for students to bully and be bullied, at school and online. Talk with your child, and be aware of personality changes and mood swings.
- Spend time with your middle school student. Set a good example, provide encouragement and show him or her that your love is unconditional.

## **GET GOING: TIPS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS**

Check out our tips and information for college and career readiness on pages 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Find more tips at [www.mebasc.com](http://www.mebasc.com).

*\*Source: Center for Disease Control*

*\*\*Source: US Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools.*

# COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

College and Career Readiness is an initiative designed to better prepare students for the workforce by making education more relevant to future careers. College and Career Readiness provides all public school students with resources to identify and then achieve career goals. The program spans all grade levels, exposing students to various careers and showing how their interests and education directly impact their futures.

## **IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...**

Students learn about a variety of professions through career awareness activities.

## **IN MIDDLE SCHOOL...**

Students explore careers to identify clusters of study relevant to their aspirations and abilities. Beginning in the 8th grade, students develop and annually update a flexible Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) with help from school counselors and career specialists as well as parents or parental designees. This four-year plan helps students begin planning for their futures, making them more aware of what it takes to achieve their goals.

## **IN HIGH SCHOOL...**

Students learn about the workplace firsthand through job shadowing, apprenticeships or internships. In the 10th grade, students declare a major based on their chosen cluster of study. School districts offer courses organized around these clusters of study.



## HOW PARENTS CAN SHARE IN THIS EFFORT

- Help students choose a cluster of study and major.
- Offer input when students develop their IGP.
- Help students prepare for postsecondary study, specialized training or employment after graduation.
- Encourage employers or businesses to get involved by offering internships, in-class speakers and other services to local schools and the community.

## WHAT ARE CLUSTERS OF STUDY?

Clusters of Study organize occupations and industries into 16 groups, or clusters, according to related skills and knowledge needed. The curriculum is designed to increase students' exposure to career information and opportunities, make learning more relevant and better prepare them for future careers.

### CLUSTERS OF STUDY

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ▶ Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources | ▶ Health Science  |
| ▶ Architecture and Construction           | ▶ Hospitality and Tourism                                 |
| ▶ Arts, AV Technology and Communications  | ▶ Human Services  |
| ▶ Business Management and Administration  | ▶ Information Technology (IT)                             |
| ▶ Education and Training                  | ▶ Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security            |
| ▶ Finance                                 | ▶ Manufacturing   |
| ▶ Government and Public Administration    | ▶ Marketing, Sales and Service                            |
|   | ▶ Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) |
|   | ▶ Transportation, Distribution and Logistics              |

*\* Clusters of study may differ among school districts. Check with your local school district, school counselor or career specialist to learn more about specific course offerings.*

# COLLEGE ACCESS

Postsecondary education, whether a certification, diploma, certificate, two- or four-year degree, plays an important role in your child's future. Today's students have more options than ever before, but the process of finding the right school, applying, enrolling and getting financial aid can be confusing and overwhelming.

For many families, cost is the biggest obstacle to continuing education. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), a form prepared annually by current and prospective college students to determine eligibility for federal student financial aid, can help. It is a primary and critical step in accessing more than \$150 billion available in federal aid and is also a requirement for many grants, student loans and/or scholarships. Speak with your school counselor or career specialist for FAFSA details.

The Midlands community boasts of a wide array of opportunities for students and parents to continue their education. From technical colleges to universities, your child can find the educational institution that best meets his or her career interests, needs, budget and schedule. A partial list of Midlands institutions is included below. View a complete listing online from the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education at [www.che.sc.gov](http://www.che.sc.gov).

## **PUBLIC TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

### **Midlands Technical College**

Airport, Batesburg-Leesville, Beltline, Fairfield, Fort Jackson Center, Harbison and Northeast Campuses

[www.midlandstech.edu](http://www.midlandstech.edu)

(803) 738-8324 • (800) 922-8038

## **COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES**

### **University of South Carolina**

[www.sc.edu](http://www.sc.edu)

(803) 777-7000

### **Allen University**

[www.allenuniversity.edu](http://www.allenuniversity.edu)

(803) 376-5700

### **Benedict College**

[www.benedict.edu](http://www.benedict.edu)

(803) 253-5000

### **Columbia College**

[www.columbiasc.edu](http://www.columbiasc.edu)

(800) 277-1301

### **Columbia International University**

[www.ciu.edu](http://www.ciu.edu)

(800) 777-2227

**Find more college access tips at [www.mebasc.com](http://www.mebasc.com).**

# CAREER READINESS

Students rely mainly on their parents for career guidance. While well-informed about skills and options related to their career field, parents are often unfamiliar with other fields and opportunities. Check out tips below to help your child plan and prepare for a bright future.

## ▶ **START YOUNG**

Talk about various jobs when reading books, watching television and observing worksites.

## ▶ **SHARE YOUR JOB EXPERIENCE**

Talk about what you do, skills needed for different jobs and the types of behaviors expected in professional situations. Take your child to work with you to observe an actual work environment.

## ▶ **IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES**

Encourage your child to dream, think about and explore all the career possibilities. Discuss careers with family and friends. Visit places, people or professions of interest.

## ▶ **LOOK IT UP**

Use the Internet or library to find information about various careers, required skills and responsibilities. Visit [www.mebasc.com](http://www.mebasc.com) and click on resources for detailed information about educational paths and career opportunities organized by career cluster.

## ▶ **GET EXPERIENCE**

Encourage your child to volunteer with an organization or to find a summer job.



MEBA's *Building Your Career* helps students and future employees prepare for and successfully enter the workforce. Visit [www.mebasc.com](http://www.mebasc.com) for more tips, information and resources.

# CITIZENSHIP

Today's employers emphasize that soft skills are just as important as job-specific skills and certifications. Soft skills, also known as citizenship or employability skills, are those character traits, interpersonal skills and social habits that characterize a person's relationship with other people.

Below are some of the most important, and often the hardest to find, soft skills wanted by employers.

## ▶ **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Able to organize thoughts and ideas effectively and express clearly and persuasively when speaking or writing.

## ▶ **POSITIVE, PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE**

Displaying enthusiasm through words and actions; acting in a manner that is responsible, fair and respectful of others.

## ▶ **ADAPTABILITY**

Able to handle multiple goals, tasks and inputs while understanding and adhering to constraints of time resources and systems.

## ▶ **TEAM WORK**

Able to work well with others in a professional manner to achieve a common goal.

## ▶ **INITIATIVE AND GOAL ORIENTATION**

Able to recognize opportunities for growth or need for change and then determine and implement appropriate steps for achievement.

## ▶ **CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING**

Able to evaluate a situation and effectively and accurately identify potential problems and solutions.

# HOT JOBS OF THE FUTURE

**We have a talent disconnect — too few workers with the skills employers need.**

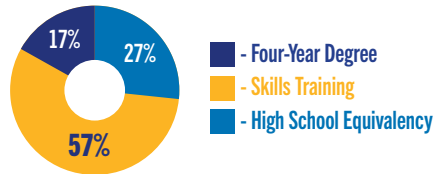
In today's job market, it is increasingly important for students to consider not only their personal interests but also workforce demands when choosing a future career. Taking into account job availability, employer needs and industry growth can help today's students successfully become part of tomorrow's workforce.

The following five career clusters are predicted to have the largest growth expectancy in the Midlands – the most jobs for which employers will need skilled workers – through 2030.

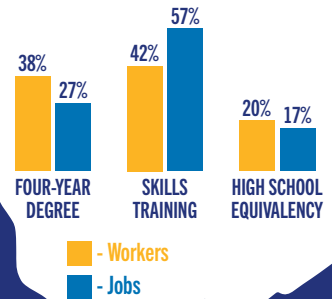
- ▶ Health Sciences
- ▶ Information Technology (IT)
- ▶ Advanced Manufacturing
- ▶ Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
- ▶ Construction Technologies

Parents should encourage their child to explore these “hot jobs of the future” to see if there is a career path that is right for them. Not only can it increase a child's opportunities for success, but it can also help close the gap between skilled workers and available jobs, promoting economic growth for our community as a whole. **Learn more at [www.mebasc.com](http://www.mebasc.com) and click on resources.**

## SOUTH CAROLINA'S JOBS BY EDUCATION REQUIREMENT



## SOUTH CAROLINA'S JOBS & WORKERS BY EDUCATION LEVEL



Source of data:  
National Skills Coalition  
([nationalskillscoalition.org](http://nationalskillscoalition.org))



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