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# WITHIN REACH

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## **Benefits of Early Career Exploration**

*In today's labor market, great career planning leads to great careers. Here are some of the key benefits of not procrastinating and starting career preparation early:*

1. Career exploration provides a much-needed reality check. It helps children understand what occupations are like, what skills and education they require and what lifestyles they can afford.
2. Career exploration expands your children's horizons. Many children can't name more than twenty occupations. Career exploration exposes them to occupations they may never have dreamed of before.
3. Career exploration saves time and money. Armed with self-awareness and accurate information, children can obtain the right training and education they need to achieve their goals and find careers they will enjoy for years to come while avoiding high student loan debt. By planning early, parents can also take advantage of savings and cost-reduction opportunities (including scholarships, dual credit, and grants) that can reduce debt and improve the likelihood of successful completion in higher education.
4. Career exploration helps students take advantage of opportunities. As students' progress educationally, they have lots of choices – what high school courses to apply for, what internships or apprenticeships to take, what kind of higher education institution to attend, or what major or certificate to pursue at those institutions. Having a goal in mind will help students look for and benefit from quality career-building opportunities.