



# Get a Life

Parent Edition



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## Overview

*Get a Life* is a game about college and career awareness. It is designed to help you start a conversation with your family about how a person's choices after high school can affect their future.

*Get a Life* and the activities presented here are appropriate for students from 7th through 12th grades.

These activities utilize the K20 Game-Based Learning program *Get a Life*. If you don't already have access to *Get a Life* or other K20 games, you can register for a free account at [k20center.ou.edu/getgames](http://k20center.ou.edu/getgames). If you already have access to K20 Center games, refer to the K20 Game Portal Guide if you need help adding *Get a Life* to your account. As a parent, you'll be given a "teacher" account on the K20 Game Portal. This will let you create a virtual "class" for your child so they can access the games and you can monitor their progress.

This document is divided into two sections: one for parents, and one for students. It is designed this way so your child can get started on these activities on their own, and you can jump into the conversation when you are both ready.





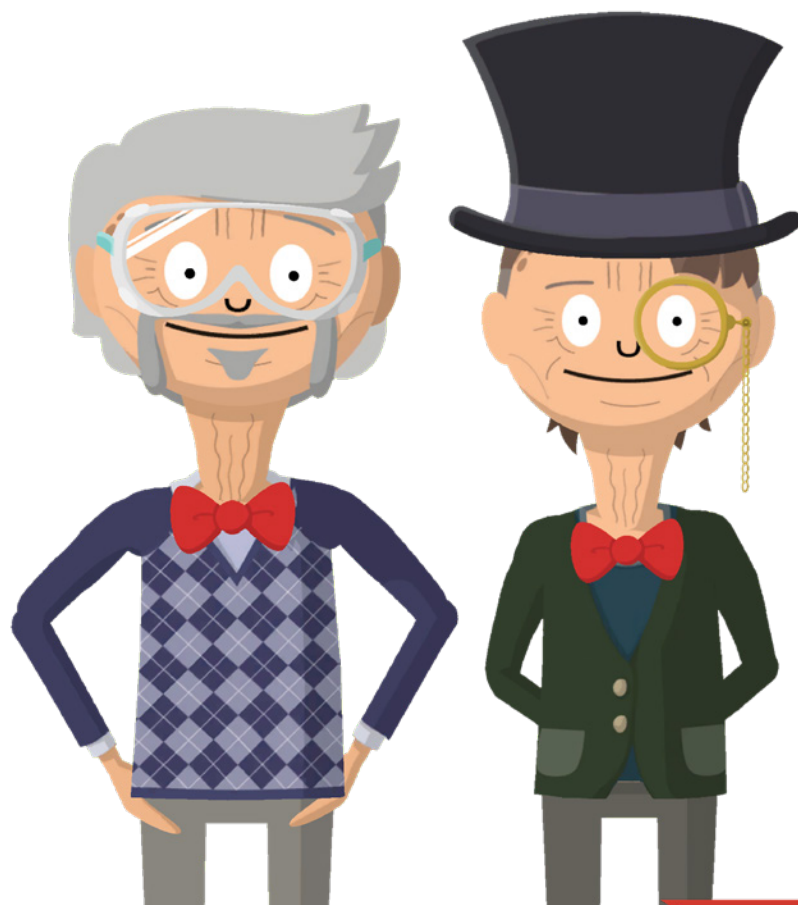


## Your Role as a Parent

Your role is to help the students in your family connect their experiences in *Get a Life* with an awareness of their future education and career options. This guide provides advice to help facilitate those conversations and to help your family get the most out of *Get a Life*.

Three activities are included below. In each one, your child will play through a scenario in *Get a Life*, complete a 5- to 10-minute exercise, then have an opportunity to discuss their experience with you.

*Get a Life* is a standalone experience that should provide all of the information needed to play. You can either set up the game and let your child play on their own or play along with them. Playing *Get a Life* as a family can be a rewarding and enriching experience.





## Activities



### Activity One – What Do You Know about Getting a Life?

This activity is designed to get your child thinking about what they already know and stimulate interest in their future career choices.

The form is divided into two main sections. The left section is for character creation, featuring a 'NAME:' field with a drawing area, an 'ACT:' field, and two columns labeled 'CAREER' and 'COLLEGE' with drawing areas and icons. The right section is titled 'GET A LIFE' and contains six numbered questions about career expectations, income, education, and societal impact, with lines for answers. At the bottom of the right section are icons of books, dice, and a signpost pointing to 'START CAREER' and 'MORE COLLEGE'.

Players should then pick a career they'd like to pursue and the college they'd like to attend, then respond to the six questions on the right side of the "Character Activity Sheet." They probably won't know the answers to all of these questions, but that's ok. This activity is just to get them thinking about their future careers.

Your child can now play the game.





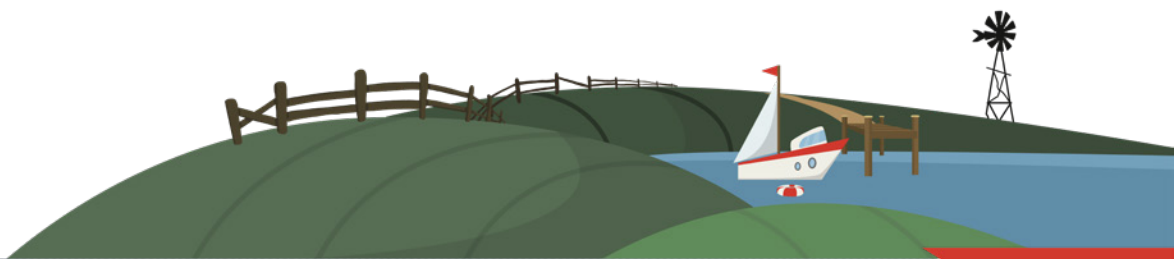
## Activity One – What Do You Know about Getting a Life?

*Get a Life* contains 10 characters, each with different life circumstances and interests. Your child will help one of the characters navigate through going to college, finding a career, and other major life events, while also maintaining the character’s “comfort” and managing their finances for retirement.

The first playthrough usually takes the longest. After they’ve completed at least one character, have a conversation about what they experienced in the game and whether they’ve changed their mind about any of the answers on their “Character Activity Sheet.”

The questions on the “Character Activity Sheet” are meant to get your child thinking about the kind of career they want, how they will get there (what education do they need), and what kind of money and quality of life can they expect.

**(Optional) Going Further:** [Explore](#) your child’s chosen career. What steps can they take to get to the career they wanted? (e.g., going to college, saving money, performing well in school)





# GET A LIFE

1. HOW MUCH DO YOU EXPECT TO BE PAID FOR THIS JOB?

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2. DO YOU THINK THIS IS HIGHER OR LOWER THAN THE AVERAGE INCOME?

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3. WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION DOES THIS CAREER REQUIRE?

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4. HOW WILL THIS CAREER AFFECT YOUR LIFE OUTSIDE OF WORK (TIME WITH FAMILY/FRIENDS, GOOD HEALTH, PERSONAL FULFILLMENT)?

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5. HOW WILL THIS CAREER ENABLE YOU TO HELP SOCIETY OR YOUR COMMUNITY?

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6. WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT THIS CAREER?

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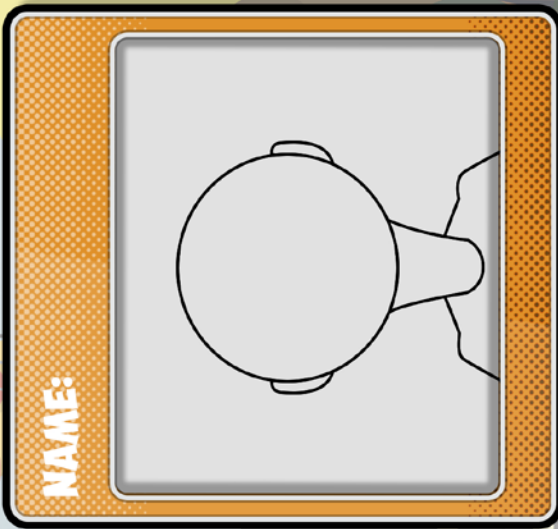
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NAME:



ACT:



CAREER



CAREER

COLLEGE



COLLEGE





## Activities

### Activity Two – How to Get a Job You Love

Many students don't really know what makes a career truly fulfilling. In this activity, we'll start a conversation about what it really means to have a job they'll love.

Your child will now play through *Get a Life* again to get them in the career mindset.

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**HOW TO GET A JOB YOU LOVE**  
(WHAT THE RESEARCH TELLS US)

**LIFE AT WORK**

"What do you do?" Chances are, you'll be asked this question a lot when you grow up.

Adults spend about a third of their lives at work, so their happiness at work affects how happy they are when they are not at work (Hobler, Watson, & Miles, 2004). We all want to have happy lives, so planning for a bright future should include planning for a satisfying career.

**LOVING YOUR JOB**

But what makes a job satisfying? It has more to do with how you feel about your work, not just how much money you make. Research shows that a job's salary doesn't affect job satisfaction and happiness very much (Judge, Podsakoff, Shaw, & Mohr, 2012). And, it turns out that more difficult jobs are long as they aren't too stressful—they actually make you happier (Judge, Knight, & Semm, 2013). This is because challenging jobs are more interesting.

You may have heard the saying, "Follow your passion," meaning that you should do something you care about. It isn't that simple, though. People's passions change. It's better to grow and develop strengths over time. Focus on discovering a range of interests instead of following your current passion (O'Keefe, Dweck, & Walton, 2018).

**JOB FIT**

One group of researchers talked with almost 10,000 people and found the one thing that mattered most to their job satisfaction was "job fit" (Mee, Yao, Curran, & Liang, 2018). This means that if someone believes that their skills, abilities, and education fit their job, they'll feel successful and happier overall. So, education is an important part of job fit. Having the skills and training needed to do a job means that people are more likely to be successful and, therefore, satisfied.

**DREAM JOB**

Other reasons for job happiness include doing work that helps others, working with people you like, job security, a short commute, having good hours, and receiving fair pay (Duda, 2016). But, the most important factor of job satisfaction is that a job is engaging, meaning you find it challenging, interesting, and enjoyable.

A lot of things contribute to job satisfaction and affect happiness. It is more for each to start exploring their strengths and interests to discover careers that draw to you. Then, you can figure out the kinds of training each of those careers would need and choose the path that makes the most sense for you. As long as you're open-minded and willing to explore, finding a "dream" job can become your reality.







## Activity Two – How to Get a Job You Love

They will need to print out the “How to Get a Job You Love” sheet on the next page of this document and read through it. While they read, they will highlight at least three ideas in the article that are the most interesting to them and note in the margins why they highlighted those ideas.

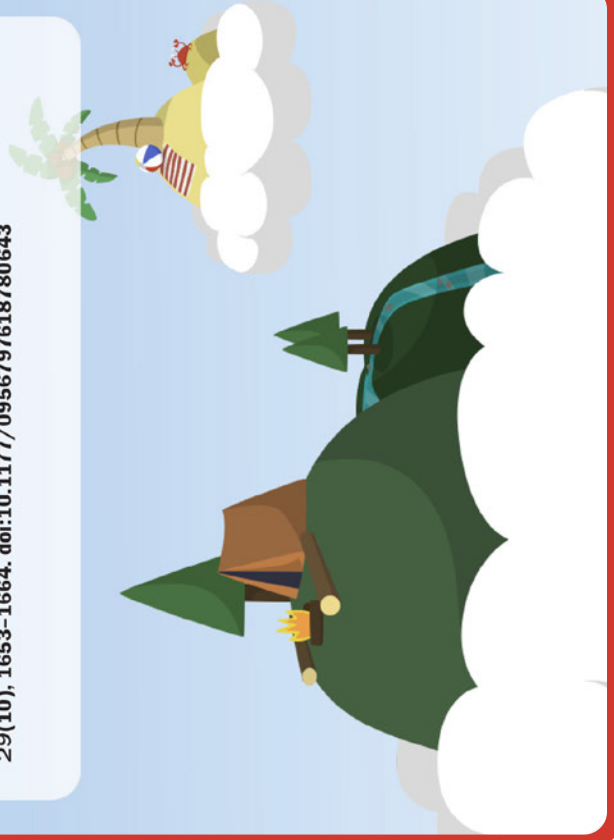
When they’re done, take some time to discuss what they highlighted and why. What was important to them about what they highlighted? Did they learn anything new?

**(Optional) Going Further:** Share some of your work experiences with your child. What was your best and worst job? What do you like about your current job?

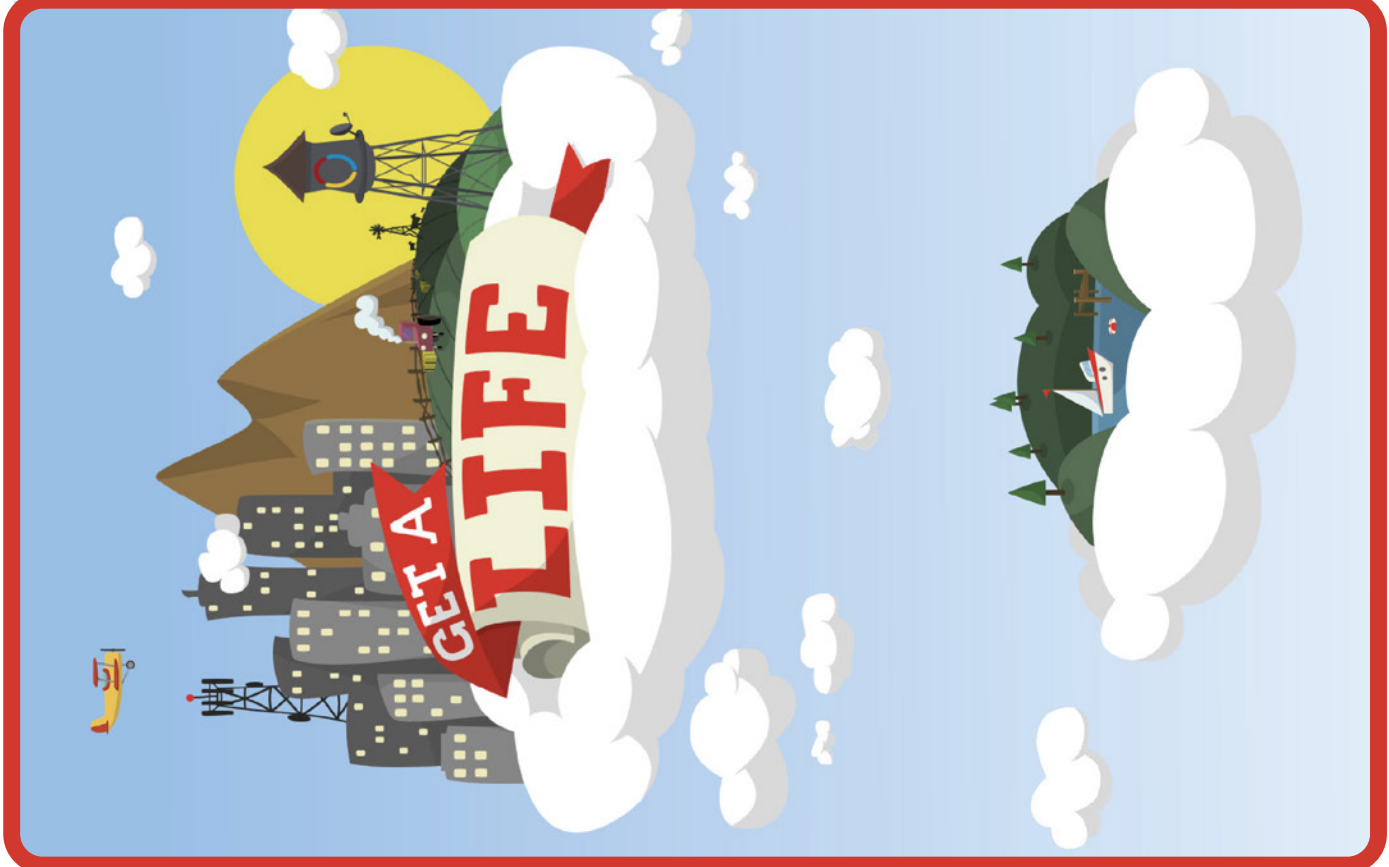


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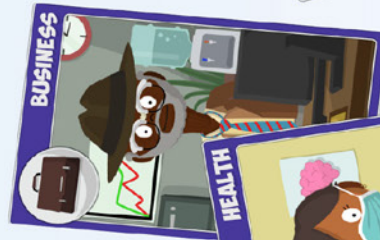
## HOW TO GET A JOB YOU LOVE

(WHAT THE RESEARCH TELLS US)

### LIFE AT WORK

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Adults spend about a third of their lives at work, so how happy they are at work affects how happy they are when they are not at work (Heller, Watson, & Iltis, 2004). We all want to have happy lives, so part of planning for a bright future should be planning for a satisfying career.



### LOVING YOUR JOB

But what makes a job satisfying? Is it how much money you make? Are easier jobs more satisfying? If you enjoy the work, will you be happier? Research finds that a job’s salary doesn’t affect job satisfaction and happiness very much (Judge, Piccolo, Podsakoff, Shaw, & Rich, 2010). And, it turns out that more difficult jobs—as long as they aren’t too stressful—are actually more satisfying (Fullager, Knight, & Sovarn, 2013). This is because challenging jobs are more interesting.

You may have heard the saying, “follow your passion,” meaning that you should do what you have fun doing. It isn’t that simple, though. People’s interests change. It’s better to grow and develop strengths over time and focus on discovering your interests instead of following your current passion (O’Keefe, Dweck, & Walton, 2018). After all, are you interested in the same things now that you were a few years ago?

### JOB FIT

One group of researchers talked with almost 10,000 people and found that the one thing that mattered most to their job satisfaction was “job fit” (Iltis, Yao, Curseu, & Liang, 2018). This means that if someone believes that their skills, abilities, and education fit the job they’re doing, they’ll feel successful and happier overall.

The people who were happiest with their jobs felt that they could do it well, and so they felt satisfied from being successful. Not surprisingly, education was an important part of job fit. Having the skills and training needed to do a job meant the workers were more likely to be successful and, therefore, satisfied.



### DREAM JOB

Other reasons for increased job happiness includes doing work that helps others (clergy members, firefighters, and teachers, for example), working with people you like, as well as having good hours, job security, a short commute, and receiving fair pay (Duda, 2016). But, researchers found that the most important factor of job satisfaction is that a job is engaging, meaning you find it challenging, interesting, and enjoyable.

A lot of things contribute to job satisfaction and influence happiness. It is never too early to start exploring your strengths and interests to discover careers that may fit you. Then, you can investigate the kind of training you’ll need and figure out which makes the most sense to you. As long as you’re open minded and willing to explore, you can make having one of these “dream” jobs your reality.



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## Activities



### Activity Three – Challenge Accepted

*Get a Life* offers a large variety of different career paths that players can choose from. The strength of the game is the variety of experiences it contains. In this activity, your child will explore what “getting a life” could look like in a variety of situations and maybe even learn about some new and interesting careers.

### ACHIEVEMENTS



**TRADESMAN**

Complete the game after going to technical school.



**LOADED**

Complete the game with a high savings level.




**ALUMNI**

Complete the game with a bachelor's degree.



**LEGEND**

Complete the game with a high civic level.



**BALLER**

Complete the game with a high comfort level.



**SPEED RUN**

Complete the game without going to college.



**MILLIONAIRE**

Complete the game with more than \$1,000,000 in savings.



**KNOW IT ALL**

Complete the game with a Doctorate degree.



**OFF THE GRID**

Go off the grid and still complete the game.



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### **Activity Three – Challenge Accepted**

They will now play through *Get a Life* while trying to check off as many achievements as possible. These achievements encourage your child to explore different careers and educational paths, or meet certain requirements. When they're done, have a conversation about what they experienced. Here are some questions to help guide you:

- Which achievement was the hardest? Why?
- How did going to college compare with skipping college entirely?
- Did your character's level of education affect the types of opportunities they saw?
- Which careers paid the most? Was the game easier with a higher salary?
- What are some questions you still have?
- Are there any careers you are interested in learning more about?

**(Optional) Going Further:** Start a college prep plan with your child. See if your child qualifies for [OK Promise](#).



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