

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND CAREER EXPLORATION

When schools provide opportunities for students to explore careers during the secondary years, students are more likely to make better decisions about the careers they choose to pursue after high school. Additionally, student engagement is increased, and graduation rates improve when students are given time to learn about careers (Godbey & Gordon, 2019; James, 2024; Kim & Lee, 2023).

Preschool and elementary-aged students typically acquire ideas about which careers might fit their interests from a small pool of information and judge their ideas about careers from common misconceptions (Masters & Barth, 2022). To overcome this, early education centered around career exploration is needed (Ginerva et al., 2024). This ensures that students comprehend a wide range of potential career pathways and possibilities (Cinamon & Yeshayahu, 2021).

When developing a career education program, it should include a variety of career interests and outcomes that allow students to determine their potential vocational strengths and talents (Ginerva et al., 2024; James, 2024; Kim & Lee, 2023). To create genuine connections about career possibilities, career exploration should incorporate activities that engage students in hands-on learning. Students are more likely to retain information about potential careers when they participate in hands-on activities that mimic the work of career professionals to the greatest extent possible (Godbey & Gordon, 2019; Groth, 2024; Oliveira & Araújo, 2022; Turnlund, 2019). By exploring job-specific tools or practicing job-related tasks, students find out what careers they are interested in learning more about and discover what they are not interested in pursuing (Turnlund, 2019).

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