

Middle Years to Careers



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY GUIDE

for Middle School Career Development

Guide 3: Promoting Community Partnerships

PRESENTED BY



Ohio Statewide
**Family
Engagement
Center**
— at The Ohio State University —

Guide 3: Promoting Community Partnerships

GRADES:



Career Awareness

Career Exploration

Career Planning

Community partnerships provide students with support towards their future careers

As a middle school teacher or counselor, you can help connect students and their families to community resources that support career development. This is an important part of the career exploration process as students are able to gain real-life exposure to careers.

This guide, the third of three, provides ideas for connecting students and families with a network of community partners that support career development, such as job shadowing. The first guide helps you connect with families and students about career-related self-awareness activities they can try out during middle school, and the second guide provides ideas for engaging with families to support students exploring a wide range of careers.

Why are community partnerships important for students' career development?

Middle school marks the starting point for many of the academic plans and decisions students and their families will make throughout the course of their studies. Ideally, students choose electives and

courses that align with their interests and skills and build on those choices as they go through middle and high school. After engaging in the career exploration process and learning about several careers they might be interested in, middle school students should seek opportunities to learn more about what these careers look like in the real world. One way for students to gain these experiences is through establishing a network of community partnerships dedicated to supporting students' career development. Families should be viewed as partners in this work as they are often critical to the formation and maintenance of this network.

How to use this guide

You can use this guide for ideas and to capture notes about your next steps, to ensure you are engaging families every step of the way towards supporting student career development! When schools, families, and members of the community form partnerships to support students in career development, all students have opportunities to succeed. To see our latest "Middle Years to Careers" resources, visit: <https://ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu/middle-years-to-careers/>.

Image above borrowed from the Ohio Department of Education's [Career Connections Framework](#)

Family Engagement Activities Promoting Community Partnerships

1

IDEA:

Develop a network of community/business partnerships and share these resources with families in your school.

EXAMPLES:

Solicit opportunities for community partnerships by reaching out to families in the school community.

Ask families: “Are you interested in or do you know anyone who may be interested in serving as a professional contact for students who are exploring their career interests?” This may include providing job shadowing opportunities, conducting mock interviews, serving as a mentor, etc.

Create and distribute a list of community partners (via email, shared on a website, etc.)

NOTES:

Family Engagement Activities Promoting Community Partnerships

2 IDEA:

Collaborate with families to review student results from interest inventories and exploration activities, generating opportunities to identify more targeted connections with community partners.

EXAMPLES:

Based on students' results on interest inventories and career exploration activities, identify gaps within the established network of community partners and collaborate with families to brainstorm creative ways to expand the network to incorporate these areas.

Ask community partners: "Currently we have students interested in XX careers, but only have established partnerships with XX career mentors. Would you be willing to help with XX?"

Encourage families to support their child's motivation and independence by promoting their personal responsibility in the exploration process.

Ask families: "In what ways is your child taking responsibility for their career development? How can we support their independence in this process?"

Assist families in identifying or building connections to help their child explore their areas of interest.

You can suggest that families consider the careers of their friends and individuals in their community. They can reach out to local business owners, neighbors, and other families at school to expose their child to more career options.

NOTES:

Student Engagement Activities Promoting Community Partnerships

1 IDEA:
Encourage students to seek opportunities to learn more about careers of interest.

EXAMPLES:

Provide students with a current list of community partners that they can connect with regarding career exploration.

Ask students to talk with their families about connections they may have with careers they are interested in.

Ask students: "Have you shared your career goals with your family? Who in your family do you share these ideas with? In what ways do you think your family could support you to reach your goals?"

NOTES:

Student Engagement Activities Promoting Community Partnerships

2

IDEA:

Support students as they engage with community partners.

EXAMPLES:

Encourage students to discuss ideas and plans for career exploration with their families.

Support students in engaging in a few meaningful job shadowing experiences throughout their time in middle school.

Provide students with ideas for ways to connect with business and community partners during career events (i.e. career fairs) in ways that are professional and meaningful.

NOTES:

Student Engagement Activities Promoting Community Partnerships

3 IDEA:

Assist students as they reflect on their experiences with community partners.

EXAMPLES:

Encourage students to reflect on their experiences with a parent/caregiver and someone from the school community.

Encourage students to circle back to the career exploration activities they did earlier in the year and refine their search based on new information they gained from their experiences with community partners.

Encourage students to take what they learned from their experiences with community partners and apply it to course planning.

NOTES:
